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TO-MORROW.

BY ANNIE L. MUZZEY.

What if we walk the wastes of life to-day,
Weighed down by cares and sore of heart with sorrow?
There waits for us across the dreary way
The golden dawn and splendor of to-morrow.
To-morrow
Our path shall blossom like the meads of May.

To-day from Heaven's peace we feel outcast,
We marvel if God marks the falling sparrow,
And to the shorn lamb tempers the fierce blast—
Ah, well! we shall get back our faith to-morrow.
To-morrow
Our doubts and fears and travails will be past.

To-day we hug our pains and nurse our smarts,
And have no courage to pluck out the arrow
Pressing with venomed point into our hearts—
But we shall be more firm and brave to-morrow.
To-morrow
We shall more nobly, wisely act our parts.

To-day our souls are torn with death-like throes,
But in the furrows centred by torturing harrow,
The Master of the seed-fields patient sows
The harvest we shall reap with joy to-morrow.
To-morrow
Our wilderness shall blossom as the rose.

DAVY CROCKETT ON THE TRACK;

OR,

The Cave of the Counterfeiters.

BY FRANK CARROLL,

AUTHOR OF "THE HEIR OF GLENDALE," "JOHN FAIRMORE'S PLOT," ETC.

CHAPTER XVII.

PREPARING FOR ACTION.

Quick as was Henderson's movement, the onslaught of Rob Gordon was too quick for him. He had been hindered from joining in the flight of his companions by the thought that there would be no safety in their hidden retreat if this man was left alive to serve as a guide into its recesses. The adage that "dead men tell no tales" crossed his mind as he aimed his pistol with deadly aim at the breast of the prisoner.

But his arm was struck down by a violent blow at the very instant of the discharge of the weapon, the bullet burying itself in the soil, and the pistol being violently dashed from his hand to the ground.

The villain turned, and for a moment the two men faced each other with the flashing eyes and set limbs of two wild beasts prepared for the fray.

Henderson's glance was, for an instant, averted as the other men broke from the cover of the thicket. Simultaneously Rob Gordon sprang upon him and sought to clasp him in his vigorous arms.

But the other was too quick. He sprang back, striking down the extended arms of his antagonist by a rapid, fierce blow, and the next moment was in full flight from the scene.

A rifle bullet from one of the men followed him in his flight, but the aim was too hasty, he ran on untouched.

His course had been taken toward the thicket, and ere another of his foes could repeat the shot a screen of bushes lay between him and them.

The other men, who had fled on the first alarm, were about a hundred yards distant, running at full speed in nearly the same direction.

"After them, boys!" cried Crockett. "Don't let a shadow of them escape! Wing them if they won't stop. But take the rascals alive. Don't cheat the gallows with your bullets."

The party needed no second invitation. They sprang forward at once in full chase of the fugitives. At the same moment Crockett, with a quick stroke of his knife, released the prisoner from his bonds.

He looked closely and curiously into his face, over which ran an expression of joy and gratitude for his release from the death which had, a minute before, threatened him.

"Taint a bad get-up, Ned Gordon," said Crockett, "but you can't shet old Davy's eyes. How in the thunder come you here anyhow?"

Rob had already grasped his brother warmly by the hand, and they were gazing into each other's faces with all the warmth of an affection which time nor absence had diminished.

"I've been scouting around on the business I told you of when we parted," said Ned.

"You have, hey? You've been lucky, too. You've found your men, but it's a durned queer finding. You're like the fighting customer that laid on his back and held the top fellow down by sticking his nose between the fellow's teeth. I wouldn't like much of the kind of fighting we caught you at."

"I was trying to get a prisoner out of their clutches when they captured me. I had learned some very dangerous secrets, and they were just going to make sure of my keeping them."

"What prisoner?" asked Rob, eagerly.

"A young lady of your acquaintance, by name Maggie Campbell."

"Where is she? Did she escape with you?"

"Yes. She ran round the corner of the bush there just as these men came in sight. I waited for them to throw them off the track."

"Did they recapture her?"

"I don't know. I noticed that Gillespie, the man who abducted her, left the gang before they came up to me."

"Gillespie!" cried Crockett.

THE ESCAPE OF GILLESPIE WITH HIS CAPTIVE.

"Yes, that's the name he went by."

"What sort of a looking cuss?"

"A tall, raw-boned man, with heavy black whiskers, and a face near as dark as a mulatto."

"Dick Brown, to a hair!"

"Maggie went round that bush?" asked Rob, nervously.

"Yes, she ran round to the left, as they came up there to the right."

"Come with me then. We must get on her track, and save her from that villain if he has indeed recaptured her," cried Rob, as he picked up the rifle he had dropped in his onslaught, and prepared for a hasty departure.

"Hold a minit," said Crockett. "What's this secret you know, Ned?"

"The hiding-place of these villains. They have a cave under Sugar Hill, into which I tracked them, and it's there they have, no doubt, fled now."

"I'll bet a cow I was right, Rob," said Davy, with a light-hearted swing of his rifle. "See here, Ned, don't that run of water lead into it?"

"Yes."

"I knowed it! I knowed my eyes and Whirlwind's nose hadn't guv out! Running water won't hold a scent and won't keep a trail. You go on, Rob, and look after Maggie. I'm going to dig these coons out of their hole, and want Ned to show the way in."

"All right," said Rob. "Send a man after me. I might want help."

He was off the next instant toward the spot pointed out by his brother, stepping over the body of the gambler, who lay on the ground, quite dead.

"Queer we've heard no firing," said Davy, as he and his companion set out in the opposite direction. "Are the boys trying to run them down, or have the varmints got out of rifle-shot?"

"Too much start," said Ned, as they hurried forward. "The main party was almost too far for a sure shot when our boys started, and Henderson has given them the slip somehow."

With common consent they directed their steps toward where the stream left its covert of bushes in its downward flow from the hill-side.

They had reached within a short distance of this spot when they met the pursuers, utterly at fault, and grouped together as if for consultation.

"They've slipped through our fingers like buckwheat cakes down a darkey's throat," said Baldwin, making himself the spokesman. "They knew the woods too well, and dodged in and out behind trees and thickets, till they were out of sight before we knew it."

"How about Henderson—the last man—did he get off?" asked Ned, anxiously.

"Yes, he broke clean through a briary patch up there, and so got out of range of our rifles."

"Did you follow them up to this point?" asked Davy.

"Yes. They run like old Nick himself. We were about three hundred yards behind when they came just hereabouts. They slipped out of sight all of a sudden like, and where the blazes they got to is too deep for me to touch bottom."

"They've made cover, Ned," said Crockett.

"Sure enough," was the reply. He continued, addressing the others: "There's none of you know that that solid-looking hill is as hollow as a honey-comb. It is all eat out into caves, of which I've been through a dozen myself, and I don't know how many more there are. This place is the head-quarters of the gang which has been banging about this part of the country. They're in there now, and if we want them we've got to go in there for them."

They all listened with deep astonishment to this strange information about a locality which they had known all their lives, without suspecting any mystery to be connected with it. Who was this stranger who was so much beyond them in knowledge of their own native ground?

This thought found expression in a question by Ben Baldwin.

"How came you to know so much about it? Have you been one of their gang?"

"This man's a friend of mine, Ben," said Crockett, severely.

"That's enough, Davy, a man don't want a better passport than your word," replied Baldwin. "But the story your friend tells is a hard nut to crack."

"I found my way in by following on the track of a Brownstown gambler, the same man who tried to shoot me, and whose carcass lies over yonder, with a bullet through his brain."

"And did you find out their game in there?" asked another of the party. "We've had our eyes on them about these diggings a good spell. We knowed there was some deviltry up, but ain't been able to find out what it is. There's been no burglary, or highway robbery, or anything of the sort about here."

"I have a notion that I have found out."

"What is it?" said Crockett, advancing with a show of curiosity.

"Do you know what that is?" asked Ned, handing his friend a small article.

"I should say a five dollar gold piece," said Davy, after closely examining it.

"Try your eyes on it," said Ned to Baldwin. "Colonel Crockett's eyes are better judges of coon skins than of gold pieces."

"Faith that's the money I generally use," said Davy, laughing. "I don't buy much, except whisky, and I'm very economical with that. I'll go a couple of coon skins on a quart, if it's my treat; but when I'm alone I always carry bare skins to buy half pints."

"Yes, I've heard the story of your treating the crowd last election," said Baldwin. "He was down at Tim Mooney's grocery, lads, with one coon skin in his pocket, and a mighty dry crowd waiting for their whisky. So he lays out his skin in whisky and Tim throws it into the loft while he pours out the old rye. Now the loft was made of open logs, and while they were drinking, Davy just picked out the skin with his ramrod, and slapped it down on the counter for another round. And he kept on treating on that one skin till the whole crowd was well primed with whisky."

"I made it all right with Tim afterward," said Crockett, after the laugh had subsided. "I wanted votes that day, and they had to be bought with old rye."

"This is mighty like gold," said Baldwin, after a long examination. "Is it a counterfeit?"

"Feel its weight. It's a split piece, filled with lead."

"And is that the game they've been playing?"

"Yes. These things have been spread around the country for ten years past, and I fancy that this is the workshop from which most of them came."

"You got this piece there?"

"I did, and saw where they were made. They've got everything complete in their den to turn out this light gold in large quantities."

"By all that's good this is a dangerous business," said Baldwin. "We must go for them."

"And that's a dangerous business too," said Gordon. "They have all found their arms by this time, and there are places in the caves that can be defended against ten times their numbers. Besides it is pitch dark, we shall have to carry lights, and they may ambush us in any dark corner, and be away before we can return their fire."

"It's risky, that's a fact," said Crockett, "but I'm going in. Who's with me?"

There was a full chorus of affirmative responses.

"That's clever. But the entrance must be guarded. They may slip out while we slip in. Then I want one of you to go and help Rob, who is in sarch of the devil that run away with his gal. You take that on, Tom. You'll find him a bit to the left of where we ambushed."

"Hadn't we better send over to my place, rouse my darkeys, and put them on guard here, while we enter the caves?" asked Baldwin. "We shall need a strong force if they show fight."

"Exactly. That's not a bad p'int. Thompson here will run over for them."

"It is my notion," said Gordon, "that two or three only should go in at first on a scout. We've got to feel our way very cautious in this matter."

"That would answer in a wood-scout," said Davy, "but where the front fellows have got to light themselves up, they want plenty of sharp eyes back to look out for squalls. It's a kind of fire-hunt we're trying on, and we want somebody ready to pull trigger when the deer's eyes shows."

"That's just the ticket," cried Baldwin. "I've been trying to calculate how we were going to manage this business with any sort of safety. There's two or three fire-hunt pans at my house. Bring them over with you, Thompson, they are just what we want."

While waiting for the return of their envoy, Gordon explained to the others the mode of entrance into the caves, and gave them an account of his adventures within them.

"If they cut so deep as that into the rock, and have so many narrow passes and dark chambers, I'm afraid we've got a big job before us," said Baldwin. "They can lay back in ambush and shoot us down one by one."

"If they do, old Betsy will speak out at the flash and somebody will get hurt," said Davy. "It ain't all on one side, not by no sort."

"The fire pans will be a great help," said Gordon. "They will cover us in the shadow, and throw their eyes into the glitter. The flash will spoil their aim, and it won't be so easy to hit us. We know there's no friends of ours in there, and we can fire at the flash of an eye."

"What I'm most afeard of," said Davy, "is that they've got another opening out. While we're worming through the hill, they may be cantering through the woods. Come, Ned. It'll be an hour afore Thompson gets back. Let's you and I make a scout round Sugar Hill. It mought pay. We mought eye a trail, or maybe see some of these larks on the wing. The rest of the boys can watch this opening."

"That's a good idea," said Gordon.

Without more ado they shouldered their rifles and started.

It was no promising task they were undertaking. The circuit of the hill was a walk of four or five miles, through "bush and brake and briar," and over a hard forest floor, on which no tracks of man or beast would be easily discernible.

Whirlwind accompanied them. The dog had already proved so serviceable that they hoped much from his keen instinct.

The hill was principally covered with forest, the bush not extending far round its slope, and they had a clear view through the tree trunks, nearly to its summit.

"What way did the opening strike in, Ned?" asked Crockett.

"Nearly straight through, as far as I could make out."

"There's no let out about here, that's sure as shooting. But there's a bit of underbrush on the hill there, near opposite your opening. I've hunted over all this ground, and I'll go high that if there's any hole in the hill it's under cover of that briar."

"There goes Whirlwind on a scent," said Ned.

"Yes. He smells coon, that's all," said Crockett, whistling him back.

They were soon opposite the bush alluded to. It ran for about a quarter of a mile along the hill, extending back nearly half way to its summit. It was nearly bare of trees, but the bushes had grown to a height of seven or eight feet, and were, like their counterparts on the other side, so closely entwined by brambles and briars as to forbid easy passage.

There was here no stream to afford a watery way to the cavern, and no trace of a path by which the bushes might be traversed. To all appearance the thicket was the undisputed home of the smaller animal creation. The raccoon, the opossum, the rabbit, the squirrel, and a host of yet smaller creatures, dwelt here secure; the hunting fraternity, when descending to such small game, finding it in sufficient abundance in the open forest.

"There's been nobody through there lately," said Crockett, after a critical survey of the locality, in which he closely examined the appearance of the whole thicket by the aid of his glass. "For all that, Ned, it maybe covers a hole which they ain't had any use for."

"Likely enough," replied Gordon.

"I don't know whether it's very likely or no. There's one thing sure, it'd be a week's work to go through it, except we happened right on the spot."

"What do you propose, then?"

"To send some of the darkies round here, and put them on the watch. We've got to go in t'other hole, and we'll drive the rats out one end or t'other. We'll split Ben Baldwin's boys and put some at both ends, while we scour out the middle. They mayn't be much use at stopping the reprobates, but they can raise the alarm."

"Let them conceal themselves, then, at the bottom of the bushes, and keep an eye open for any of our game. They may find where the hole comes out."

"Jest my idee exactly," said Crockett.

The two scouts now returned to where the others were impatiently waiting for them. Thompson had returned with the bulk of Baldwin's men, amounting to a dozen stalwart negroes. They were variously armed with hammers, scythe-blades and muskets, while Mose led them, carrying a rifle, and followed by a brace of hounds.

The project of the scouts was communicated to the others, and being approved of was at once put into effect, half the men, under the leadership of Mose, being sent to the point in question, with full instructions how to act.

The remainder were stationed on each side of the stream, being so disposed as to be hidden by the bushes from any person coming out. One of the dogs was kept with each squad, as it was considered that they might become of great assistance in the pursuit of a flying foe.

Crockett never parted with his own dog, and intended to take him into the cave.

The dark sentries squatted down round the entrance, grasping their weapons as if they hoped for the opportunity to use them, and with a mingled look of excitement and resolution on their faces. Whether they would be frightened out of their wits by the appearance of the foe, or could be depended on in an emergency, remained an open question.

CHAPTER XVIII.

AN EXPLORING EXPEDITION.

In single file and with utter silence the party of pursuers stepped, one by one, into the stream, and made their slow way through the bushes.

Ned Gordon led the way, walking directly on, though holding his rifle at a poise, for fear an effort might be made to defend the exterior entrance.

The others followed in close order, glancing curiously to right and left as they did so, and astonished to find this easy pass through a thicket which they had deemed impassable.

Their astonishment was redoubled on suddenly finding themselves between the rocky walls of a narrow pass, and particularly when they emerged into the first cavern, the ante-chamber to the mysteries beyond.

They had not been without a thought that the promised cave would prove a delusion, that this stranger to the locality could not possibly know more of their own country than themselves; and some of the old hunters had trudged up the watery path with shrugs and smiles, as if impressed with the idea that they would meet with no larger opening than that made by a rock spring, from which they imagined this stream proceeded.

All doubt, however, was now dispelled. They glanced with curious surprise around the scene, their eyes resting, at length, on the dusky avenue leading still inward.

It was plain that the inmates entertained no thought of defending the exterior of their stronghold.

"We can't go much further without light," said Ned. "Best light the pans. This has got to be a mighty cautious business, gentlemen; and some of us stand a fine chance of being winged."

The fire-pans to which he alluded, and which are used in the fire-hunt of the West, consisted of common frying-pans, the handles of which were lashed to boards, several inches wide and five or six feet long. These are carried over the shoulder, the pan, in which a light wood fire is kindled, being thus thrown several feet behind the hunter. The light from the fire illuminates a circle, save were the shadow from the head falls, which shadow becomes considerable at a distance.

Within this shadow the hunter sees and shoots his game, it being revealed alone by the glitter of its eyes, which are red and fiery in the reflected light.

The negroes had brought two of these pans. These were now lit, a quantity of the wood sufficient for their anticipated purpose having been brought with them.

"Just hang here one minit," said Davy "I've got a little arrand outside."

Without further explanation he left the cave. He was absent not more than two minutes, and returned without a word as to his purpose in leaving.

"Now, lads," he said, in a low tone, "you pan-men will keep back. The rest of us will forge ahead, keeping our backs to you and the glitter out of our eyes. Your shadows will kinder cover us. If there's an eye shows ahead, old Betsy's a-going to talk; and quick as thunder, too—for there's nothing here but varment, and if it's two-legged varment, it's a question who pulls trigger first."

Ned Gordon led the way onward, his former experience of the caves now standing him in good stead. The others pressed close up behind him, in the shadow of the pans, an occasional sweep of the handle illuminating the onward path, while again the circle of illumination lay all behind them, the shadows of the carriers making a deep gloom in advance.

Thus they passed through the two other caverns which we have already described, stopping a moment, after becoming satisfied that they were undefended, to admire the wondrous beauty of the scene.

The strong glare of the light-wood blaze was flashed back from thousands of glittering points, and the alabaster hues and charming contours of the stalactite roof and walls of the caverns revealed in their full beauty to the delighted eyes of these new explorers.

Some of them manifested their pleasure in exclamations rather too loud for Davy's heedful ears. Naturally given to loquacity as he was, he felt that this was not the time nor place for it, and while as much surprised and pleased with the scene as any of them, he recognized to its full extent the prime necessity of a still tongue.

"Hold your confounded jaws back there," he ejaculated, in low but angry tones. "It's not in a tavern we are. There's rifles within hearing of your noisy tongues."

After passing the inner cavern, where their guide had so lately sat at table with the men he was now in pursuit of, they advanced through a succession of avenues and caves, each marked by some feature of beauty that, in spite of their sterner duty, attracted the eyes of most of the party to its peculiar charm.

Not so, however, with Crockett and Gordon, who led the way, and who had eyes only for the object of their quest, ears only for suspicious sounds.

The path they pursued was by no means easy walking, particularly in the momentary flashes of light which alone revealed their onward route.

Some of the passes were so contracted that they had to stoop and almost crawl to

get through. There were steep slopes, up and down which they had to make their way. There were precipitous descents, a fall from which would have proved highly dangerous, and which could only be descended with difficulty. In one cave opened a well whose depth was unfathomable to their eyes.

Combined with the caution necessary to this passage was the incessant watchfulness required to discover the foe, who might be lurking at any point in the darkness before them, and might suddenly greet them with a volley of bullets.

To avoid the peculiar danger they ran, the carriers of the pans kept a considerable distance back of the main body of hunters, remaining at the entrance of each new extension of the passage into a separate cavern, while it was explored by those in advance.

Quick flashes of the light were thrown around, the scouts intently examining, with their experienced eyes, every portion of the rocky walls and the open jaws of the succeeding avenue, and not until thoroughly satisfied that there was no ambush did they venture to advance further.

Several side avenues were observed to lead off, to the right and left. These rendered their object still more uncertain, but the best that could be done was to explore the main passage, and to try these side issues on their return.

Into one of these passes, however, Gordon led the way. A few steps within it revealed a strong wooden door. This was thrown open by their guide, and they found themselves in far the most charming portion of the caverns they had yet seen, that rare work of nature which we have already imperfectly described, and which the inmates of the caverns had christened the Temple of Beauty.

It was several minutes before they could overcome their admiration sufficiently to notice the traces of habitation in the sparse furniture of the apartment.

Gordon, in a few words, answered their eager questions, describing how he had found Maggie Campbell imprisoned here, and had released her from her thraldom.

After some minutes devoted to enjoyment of the scene, they left the apartment, Davy examining the door as they did so, and satisfying himself that it had not been placed there for this prisoner alone, but that this cell had been used as a prison for other unfortunates in the past.

Their passage through the caverns was conducted with all the silence possible for such a body of men. No word was spoken, the sound of footfalls was hardly distinguishable. The only marked sound was the occasional crackling of the burning wood; and an odd, dropping sound, which attended them throughout their course, and whose character they in vain attempted to understand. It was a sharp though light sound, as if some small but heavy article was continually falling. Some of the men grew nervous at this mysterious sound, and started as it occasionally became more distinct.

Throughout the journey Whirlwind had kept close to his master's heels, manifesting no desire to roam, and probably frightened at the gloomy and strange place in which he found himself. Davy occasionally spoke to him in a low tone, but he trotted quietly on, showing no signs of his acute senses having discovered any other persons than themselves.

As they proceeded, the side avenues increased in number. The route they had pursued had been anything but straight, winding in many a devious course, and it was impossible for them to say now in what direction they were going.

They had proceeded far enough to take them beyond the middle of the hill, in a direct line, the route—at first ascending—having now descended sufficiently to bring them below the level of the ground outside.

They began to see that they had reasoned wrongly in supposing that these caverns ran directly through the hill. But how far they might proceed underground it was impossible to say.

The numerous side avenues that now appeared made some of the men anxious for another cause. They began to fear that they might get entangled in these winding and intricate passages, and failing to find their way out, might wander about lost in this underground abode until their lights gave out, and starvation or more sudden death overtook them in the eternal darkness of the caves.

This fear became so strong that Baldwin halted the party by a slight call, and expressed his dread of going any further.

"How much longer will your wood last?" asked Davy.

"We've enough for about two hours yet."

"It's all right then. We'll go ahead."

"But how about getting out again?" reiterated Baldwin.

"You've got Davy Crockett with you. Old Davy's hunted in all sorts of queer places since you was a baby, and he never got into no scrape he didn't get out of. Keep in sight of my coat-tail, and if I don't lead you to sunshine agin then say old Betsy here can't hit a coon-skin on a barn-door."

"If you're sure of yourself I suppose we can trust you," said Baldwin. "But can anybody tell me what that infernal dropping noise means? It has got my nerves all of a flutter."

"That's the water dropping from the roof, I reckon," said Davy, with a sly smile. "Hold your narves stiff, Ben, you'll maybe have something worse to try them. We'll follow this line ten minutes more."

The ten minutes and more were up when they entered a long, low cavern, with a small stream flowing through it. The men in advance crouched down by the side, while the light-bearer—of whom there was but one now, the other light having been extinguished—threw a flash along the whole length of the cave.

Simultaneously the sharp report of a rifle was heard, reverberating with a thunderous echo throughout the cavern.

"That's old Bet's voice," cried Crockett, as the men threw themselves flat on the ground. A dark object was seen to leave their midst and flit across the cave. A few moments of utter silence succeeded.

"Fling a glim this way," cried now the voice of the redoubtable hunter from the point at which this object had disappeared.

The light was turned, so as to shine directly upon him. He was seen just stooping to pick up an object from the floor of the opposite side of the cave.

"Jist as I expected afore old Bet spoke out," he cried, in a disappointed tone. "I seed what I thought the glint of an eye, and let drive. 'Stead of that it was a flash from this tarnal rock. I brung it down, anyhow;" and he held up a small fragment of stalactite, whose surface had glittered in the light, and which his bullet had broken off from the parent rock.

"We've got to turn tail now," he said, briefly. "There's only one opening to this cave, except a hole there that wouldn't let a rat through."

"Go ahead, then," said Baldwin. "You're to lead out, you say?"

"Yes, after we find our game. They're in here somewheres, and it's our business to find where."

Shouldering his rifle he led steadily on, now keeping closer to the light.

"Lift the glim a bit so it'll shine on the floor ahead," he said. "No danger here. We're a good mile inside, and it's my notion now they're half a mile or more back. Maybe they let us pass, calculating we'd get lost and starve in this hole. If that's their game they didn't know who was playing in t'other hand."

He walked steadily and rapidly on, choosing without a moment's hesitation among the many and apparently distracting avenues, with as much apparent assurance of his route as though he was in the open woods.

The others followed, some in admiration at a sagacity the basis of whose reasoning they could not conjecture; some in alarm and fear that this was foolhardy guessing, as they seemed to be passing through unfamiliar scenes.

But this newness of appearance arose from the fact that they were viewing the several caves from an opposite point of view to that from which they had previously seen them.

Glancing down an avenue they were passing, they recognized the strong wooden door which they well remembered having so lately seen. All alarm was now changed to admiration and wonder at the remarkable performance of their leader.

"Where did you get that piece of counterfeit, Ned?" Davy now asked.

"In that workroom I was telling you of."

"Can you find it agin?"

"I think so."

"I'll bet we'll find them somewhere thereabouts. They're not deep in, or else my eyes and Whirlwind's nose ain't worth shucks. It's like they thought to save themselves trouble and danger by getting us lost. The devil himself, if he were lost there in the dark would have a hard tug to get out. They'll be like to try and guard their secrets, and will lay low and keep dark for us on the way. I wasn't quite sure I was right afore, and I went it blind. But now I'm going ahead on my old plan, and I'll bet whisky we skeer up the snakes and bullets afore we're much older."

A few hurried orders were given, and the light-bearer again fell back, the others forging ahead with poised rifles and throbbing hearts into the deep gloom thrown by the shadow of the fire-hunter.

After proceeding a short distance, their guide suddenly turned into a narrow passage, proceeding at right angles from one of the chambers of the cave.

"It's smooth ground here, and no breakers ahead," he said, in a hurried whisper, as they gathered at the entrance. "Keep back a little more with the light, you're not an extra good target, but you might get winged. We'll have to feel our way a little in the dark. Every man had best touch the fellow ahead of him, and I'll lead you so we won't get scattered."

This advice was at once acted upon, and they plunged ahead into the thick darkness. The floor was smooth and level, as their guide had declared, and their progress was comparatively easy.

The light flung its lurid illumination behind them, too far distant for them to be touched by its gleam, while its carrier seemed to be a huge shadowy form, slowly advancing toward them.

Suddenly the dog, which had still kept close to his master's heels, gave a quick savage bark. Simultaneously a rifle flashed to their left, almost in the faces of the silent leaders of the file, and the fire-bearer stooping at the flash, a piece of the burning wood was hurled in whirling circles from the pan, struck by a bullet.

The keen flash revealed to Crockett a shadowy form, almost within touching distance of himself. A quick sweep of old Betsy struck this antagonist on the temple, hurling him to the ground, where he was instantly pinned by the sharp teeth of Whirlwind.

A slight noise in the same direction attracted the quick ear of the hunter, and dropping his rifle he gave a quick, fierce bound outward. At the same instant the flash of several rifles lit up for a moment the gloomy cavern. The balls, aimed at random, hurtled harmlessly by, while the quick flash lit up the forms of three or four men just in front of them. It also displayed the fallen man with Whirlwind's teeth at his throat, and the form of Davy Crockett clasped in a tight embrace, and staggering to and fro in a deadly struggle with the leader of the outlaws, Jack Henderson.

CHAPTER XIX.

AN UNSUCCESSFUL RIDE.

While these exciting events were transpiring, Rob Gordon was engaged in a quest to him still more momentous.

With his companion, who was a hunter of some note for his sagacity, he had scoured the woods in all directions, in search of some indication of his lost betrothed.

His keen, woodsman's eyes had caught traces of her pursuer, and had followed them through the keen chase which we have related, to where she had fallen and been recaptured by Gillespie.

Here the marks of Maggie's steps were plainly discernible, and by noticing the unusual length and weight of both their steps, and the slight mark on the root where her foot had struck it, the whole story of the flight, pursuit and capture arose full formed in their minds.

She had plainly fallen here. The marks were evident on the bent and broken grass. No trace of her steps extended beyond this point. She had probably been caught up in the arms of her abductor and carried away, for the track of his steps on the grass was plainly visible, while the short stride showed that he had walked slowly away.

With a heart burning with mingled anguish and indignation, Rob pursued these slight traces, so full of significance of the injury to her he loved, and he vowed in his inmost soul to be revenged on her abductor for all the pain he had caused her and her friends.

The ground became harder, with spaces of bare rock, after a short interval, and the indistinct marks they were following utterly disappeared.

They had an idea of the general course they had taken, however, and went confidently on, hoping to regain them in the softer ground beyond.

To do so they separated somewhat, and included a considerable space between their routes, hoping, by crossing this space in more favorable ground, to recover the lost trail.

The new course taken by Rob led him toward the lane that ran at no great distance to the south of where he then was.

The search, which we have so briefly described, had already occupied several hours, from the necessity of great care to which they had been put in striving to decipher almost unintelligible marks, traces too faint to have meaning for any but experienced eyes.

Suddenly, in his southward course, he came upon that which at once arrested his attention. This was the unmistakable mark of hoofs, tramped deeply into the ground, which just here was rather soft.

They led inward from the lane, and were so distinctly impressed that a child could have followed them.

A shrill whistle from Rob called his companion to him. He was already following the track of the horse at a rapid walk when the other joined him. Without pausing, he pointed out the trail he was following, and spoke of the significance it bore to his mind.

His opinion was fully confirmed when they reached the deserted hut, and found traces of recent occupancy, marks in which they were enabled to trace not only the presence of the abductor, but that of Maggie, as well.

A piece of knotted cord that lay in one corner of the room was full of maddening meaning to the lover.

His betrothed had been bound here and left to remain while the villain who had carried her off sought the horse with which to complete his design.

He put the cord in his pocket with an undefined hope that he might in some way be enabled to make it a minister in the vengeance he designed to take on the villainous robber.

"It's plain as daylight before us now," he said, in resolute tones. "We might follow the trail blindfolded. It is a long journey that is before us. That horse was not got to take a short ride. I think we will have to strike for the Mississippi. It won't do to give him the advantage of a horse while we walk. We can make free use of Ben Baldwin's stables, and I move that we get horses and follow this black-hearted villain. He is riding double, and we may overtake him. If we do I have it in my heart to strangle him with this same cord with which he dared tie her hands."

In half an hour more they were mounted and making the best of their way through the woods. The tracks were easy to follow, and they rode onward with all the speed possible through the obstructions of trees and undergrowth that rose in their path.

But Gillespie with his prize had too much start. They found the point at which he had left the horse, and the sharp angle in the course of the latter led them to a closer examination, by which they detected the scheme that had been practiced.

"The track goes straight to the river," said Rob. "We needn't mind the trail, but can ride straight on. They can't be far ahead."

It was about the middle of the afternoon when they reached the water's edge. No object was visible on the liquid expanse except a small, yacht-like vessel, with sail set, and rapidly leaving the shore, from which it was about two hundred and fifty yards distant. On its deck stood a form he well remembered, the tall, black-whiskered person whom he had known as Dick Brown. The latter had seen and recognized the horsemen and was gazing ashore with a glance of triumph.

(To be continued in our next. Commenced in No. 23.)

The Squire of Waldenshoe.

CHAPTER I.

"A fine place! Upon my word, a very fine place!"

The speaker, Robert Hilton, was a man whose first youth had passed, leaving traces of struggle and toil upon the dark-browed forehead, and lines of indulged passion and unchecked pride about the eyes and mouth. He was leaning forward in a handsomely-appointed carriage; but the hand which lay upon the door was coarse, and appeared to have been hardened by menial work; it was not by any means a gentleman's hand, although the little finger was adorned by a gem of considerable value.

"Yes, the place is quite equal to the description we had of it," replied his companion. "There's timber for you! Why, each of those oaks is worth seventy or eighty guineas."

"Do you think that I intend to run through my twenty thousand of loose cash in such a hurry as to let you get your greedy claws on them, Mr. Brett? No, thank you. I've a taste for the picturesque, though you mayn't think it."

The carriage was passing through a really beautiful park, of sufficient extent to be worthy of the name. The ground was hilly, and broken here and there into deep rocky valleys, where ivy and great glistening masses of fern clustered round the boles of the lofty beeches. A shallow stream ran brawling over its rough channel close by the side of the drive; and in the foreground, and over the more distant slopes, were grouped, in all the careless magnificence of superb landscape gardening, the mighty forest trees of the midland counties. The scene was one of which an owner might well be proud, and Robert Hilton gazed at it with appreciating eyes—for this was Waldenshoe, and he its fortunate possessor.

A long train of circumstances had led to the grand old mansion's passing to this scion of a branch of the family long ignored and forgotten. Hugh Walden, the late master of the place, had quarrelled with his brother and his brother's children, who were his heirs, and had directed search to be made for the descendants of an aunt of his who had run away with a penniless officer—Hilton, by name—and had been disinherited by her irate father. None knew what her fate had been; and it was not until after the old man's death that traces of her whereabouts were discovered, and her grandson, the first mate on board the good ship Three Sisters, was informed that his distant relative, Hugh Walden, of Waldenshoe, had died, making him heir to the whole of his property, without condition or reservation.

Robert Hilton at once resigned his seamanship, and proceeded to London, to see with his own eyes the wonderful document which was to transform him from a hard-working, hard-handed sailor into the country gentleman, the associate of the magnates of the land. And there, sure enough, the will was—not to be disputed or misunderstood—in the hands of the grave-looking family lawyer, whose ancestors had had charge of the legal business of the Waldens for generations. The eminently respectable man of law was scandalized by Robert Hilton's loud words and overbearing manner; and when hinted doubts of his honesty and accusations of self-interest which were more than hinted, came coarsely from the sailor's lips, he intimated to his new client that the row of tin boxes with "Waldenshoe" painted upon their sides must henceforth repose on shelves in some other office than his.

Mr. Hilton was in nowise disconcerted. There were as good fish still in the sea as ever came out of it, he thought; and the dignified lawyer was not at all to his taste. He "had no mind to be dictated to by a man whom he paid with pounds, shillings, and pence for the work he did, or professed to do;" so he received the resignation very placidly, and put his business into the hands of a Mr. Brett, a person whom he knew well, and who suited him much better than did the Waldens' old solicitor. Accompanied by this same Mr. Brett, he was now, for the first time, driving up the avenue, and trying to realise that he was indeed the Squire of Waldenshoe.

A group of servants awaited his arrival within the porch, eager to welcome the "rising sun," and to proffer their requests to be retained in his service. But his arrogant demeanor had somewhat the same effect on them as it had had on the lawyer.

"I'll tell you what it is, Mrs. Norris," said the butler to the gold-spectacled housekeeper, "if that's to be the new way of ordering, and them's to be the civilest words one is to hear, I'm not going to stay more than my month, that's very certain."

"Hush! hush!" was the response. "If you speak so loud, you'll be heard."

"Well, and suppose I am? We are servants, to be sure, but we are neither his slaves nor his debtors."

Very much disgusted was the same independent-minded butler when, after he had placed the wine on the table, and arranged the dessert, and was about to retire from the dining-room, his master, wheeling his chair round, desired him to remain.

"Now tell me about everything," said Mr. Hilton, staring him straight in the face. "Who lives about here? Have I many neighbors who are good sort of folk?"

"There is the Castle, sir, Lord Towerham's place; but his lordship is abroad on a diplomatic mission," answered the butler, loftily, resolved to show Mr. Hilton that he at least knew how to speak with propriety. "And there are Sir John Cordeaux and his family, who reside about two miles from here; and there is Mr. Philip Walden."

"Mr. Philip Walden!"

"Yes, sir; the nephew of my late master. He lives in the White House at the upper end of the village, with his mother and the young ladies."

"He does! And pray what does he live on, now that his uncle's bank-notes have come to line my pockets instead of his, eh?"

"I have never had the inquisitiveness or the insolence to inquire into his private affairs, sir."

Mr. Hilton sprang from his chair with a few strong expressions, more fit for the deck of the Three Sisters than for the dining-room of Waldenshoe.

"Insolence, indeed!" he thundered. "Be off with you for an impudent rascal! No, not another word I'll hear! You wish to give me warning, do you? All the better. Be off, and shut the door after you."

"Now, did ever you hear the like of that?" said he, addressing Mr. Brett, when the butler had withdrawn. "Servants indeed setting up to teach their very masters! I'll teach them, I'll engage, and that before they're many days older!"

Mr. Brett filled his glass again and passed the decanter of port before he answered.

"Teach them as much as you like, my dear fellow, but pray be a little more cautious—a little more suave. If you behave like this (you must forgive my plain speaking) the county will vote you a bear, and perhaps cut you altogether; but, if you can only hit their fancy, there is nothing you may not aspire to—M.P., or even—"

"M.P. be hanged!" broke in Robert Hilton, angrily. "I sha'n't aspire to anything more than I've got already; and we shall see if the county will cut me when I've all these broad acres to keep me in countenance."

Mr. Brett looked through the open window at the terrace walk, with its handsome balustrade and marble statues gleaming through the dusk of the warm September twilight. He looked at the groups of noble trees which sheltered the lawns and shrubberies; and then he looked at the dark portraits of bewigged and bepowdered knights and dames who had in turn lounged on the terraces and sauntered on the lawns, and, as he looked, he thought it highly probable that his friend was right, and that the world would be inclined to forgive a great deal in the Squire of Waldenshoe.

CHAPTER II.

Dessert was on the table at Wynstone Hall, the seat of Sir John Cordeaux; but, though the silver epergne and the antique glass were as rich and as rare as those upon Robert Hilton's board, yet the same lavish profusion of costly viands and old wines was absent from the baronet's table. A better light than the shadowy evening one would have shown that the Turkey carpet was wearing threadbare, and that the crimson draperies of the mullioned windows were faded and frayed. Some malicious tongues had even whispered that the diamond aigrette which flashed in Lady Cordeaux's raven hair was only paste, and that the real jewels—heirlooms from the time of Queen Bess—had gone to help to pay off some of the heavy debts which were hanging like a millstone round her husband's neck.

The property had been heavily encumbered before his time, and a large family of sons, requiring expensive education and suitable allowances, had not contributed to lessen difficulties or to pay off mortgages. Many of his boys were off his hands now, but the state of his finances continued to give Sir John cause for unceasing worry and anxiety, and he had more than once talked of going abroad for a time to try to straighten matters. But he was getting elderly, and full-grown trees do not bear transplanting; he shrank from the effort, necessary though he felt it to be; and year by year things looked blacker and blacker at Wynstone Hall.

"Papa," said Miss Cordeaux, the youngest and the best beloved of all his children, "do you know that Mr. Hilton was expected to-day?"

"Yes, Harry, I know it, and, what is more, I have seen him."

"Oh, papa, what is he like?" and Lady Cordeaux roused herself from the surreptitious little nap in which she had been indulging under cover of the twilight, to echo her daughter's query.

"Really, my dears, I can't tell you, for I don't know."

"But you say that you have seen him?"

"I saw two gentlemen driving in a Waldenshoe carriage; one was dark and middle-aged, and wore a 'wide-awake,' while the other was thin and fair and smiling, with a very new shiny hat—what you would call a dapper little man. Now, Harry, you determine what he is like."

"The new shiny hat tells tales, papa. I rather fancy that Mr. Hilton is a dapper little man."

"You will call on him at once, I suppose?" said Lady Cordeaux.

"Yes—some time next week; and, my dear, we must have a dinner-party for him. As we are his principal neighbors, it falls to our lot to introduce him to our world here; so you and Harry had better review your forces, and see what we can do for him in that line."

Sir John Cordeaux had an idea in his head which caused him to suggest the dinner-party—an idea vague and undefined as yet, but which had nevertheless occupied a good share of his thoughts for many days past. Mr. Hilton had been suddenly raised from humble life to unexpected affluence and position. He must necessarily be ignorant of the ways of society, and he must also as evidently need a wife. Now why should not he, Sir John Cordeaux, establish a claim on his gratitude by becoming his god-father, as it were, in the county? And why should not Harry have the first and best chance of becoming mistress of Waldenshoe?

Sir John loved his pretty daughter more, perhaps, than he had loved anything else on earth, excepting himself. He would not force her inclinations for the world—so he said—but he could see no reason why she should not be Robert Hilton's wife as well as any other girl in England, and no reason why she should not respect him, and love him, and all the rest of it, as a wife should. He had always suspected that there was "a something" between her and Philip Walden; and long ago, when Harriet and Philip were hardly more than children, the suspicion and anticipation had given him and Lady Cordeaux infinite pleasure. But affairs were changed now. Old Hugh Walden had disinherited his brother and his brother's children in summary fashion; and Sir John was now in terror lest there really might be some attachment in that quarter. The Squire's brother had died before himself, and many thought that the event might have softened the old man's rancor, and that Philip might yet have his rights; but the opinion proved to be a mistaken one, and the will in favor of the Hiltons remained unaltered. Now Philip was avowedly looking out for something to do, whereby he might aid his widowed mother, and help to maintain his two sisters. Sir John hated to see Harriet still so intimate with the Waldens at the White House; he felt sure that Philip was honorable enough not to attempt to woo Miss Cordeaux as long as he had nothing to offer her; but yet it was not well that the young people should be so much together. Mr. Hilton would prove a valuable diversion, and, if things were properly managed, a few months might set at rest all anxiety on that score. "It is absolutely necessary that Harry should marry a rich man, bless her," said Sir John to himself; "for I don't see how I am to give her more than enough to buy gowns and pocket-handkerchiefs."

CHAPTER III.

Early on the morrow Mr. Hilton and his friend ordered saddle-horses from the well-stocked stables, and proceeded to "go over" the estate. If they had been pleased and astonished the evening before, they were doubly so now. Such snug farmsteads, such excellent cottages, such valuable woods! Truly the late mate of the Three Sisters had good reason to congratulate himself on his new berth.

"Come round by the station, Brett," he said, as they neared home on their return—"it is but a mile or so farther. I want to make inquiry about that gun that I ordered to be sent after me from London. I suppose this is the right road," and he reined his horse into a green lane which turned off at right angles to the one which they had been pursuing.

"I shall not go with you, I think," replied Mr. Brett. "I'm not much accustomed to horse exercise, and I'm about done up already."

So the friends parted, and, with a little rather disdainful raillery, Robert Hilton took his way to the railway-station. Sailor as he was, he could ride well enough, and he touched with the whip the spirited creature he bestrode, and dashed along the winding lane at a rattling pace. A few minutes brought him in sight of the station—a pretty little building, with deep wooden eaves and rose-covered walls, and a small white gate leading on to the platform. No porters happened to be about; and so, lifting the latch with his hunting-whip, he rode forward in search of one.

A fair, delicate looking lady in mourning stood on the platform with two children beside her, apparently waiting for the train, and talking with her, Mr. Hilton noticed a tall girl possessing one of the most beautiful faces he had ever seen in his life. Dark-brown hair, yet darker brown eyes, a rich, clear skin—all these she had; but it was the broad brow, the quiet, firm look upon the curving lips, which made the face unlike all other faces in its powerful yet sweet originality.

The clatter of a horse's hoofs made her turn, and she raised her eyes with a quick look of surprise and curiosity to his. Robert Hilton had been "a gentleman" for only the short space of a fortnight, and he had scarcely had time to re-model his manners yet. He was guilty of the rudeness of staring in a manner so pointed that the lady turned away and walked to a little distance, covering her confusion by playing with the children as she went.

"I beg your pardon, sir," said a voice behind him, "but you had better not bring your horse here; the—"

"Oh, the horse will do no harm. I came to inquire if there is a package here for me from London—I am Mr. Hilton, of Waldenshoe."

The station-master touched his hat.

"No, sir; nothing has come yet. But indeed, sir, I must ask you to ride outside the gate; this is quite against the rules—and there's the down express now in sight, sir! It will be here in another minute!"

But Robert Hilton had grown wonderfully impatient of control since he had heard of old Mr. Walden's eccentric will. The very spirit of contradiction seemed to possess him now. Instead of doing as he was requested, he merely turned his head to look where the long thread of snow-white steam showed the advancing train. It came on in the full swing of its speed, for it but stopped rarely between London and York, and the little station of Waldenshoe was one of the insignificant places through which it daily rushed on its panting whirling journey.

If Mr. Hilton turned to glance at it unconcernedly, his horse was not so cool. The dilated eye, and the quivering nostril, drawn back so as to display the blood-red flesh, were evidences of terror which were not lost upon the station-master.

"For Heaven's sake, sir," he implored, "go away!"

The alarm of his voice and manner affected Mr. Hilton at last, and he tried to do as he was bidden; but it was too late now. The horse reared and plunged, but would not face toward the little gate, frightened by the roar of the express, and its cloud of dust and smoke, as the train rushed onward with terrific speed. The terrified porters shrank away. The lady in mourning drove her children before her through the gate, with quick motherly instinct, to shield them from danger. The maddened horse plunged nearer and nearer to the edge of the platform. In an instant more they would be over—horse and rider beneath the wheels of the train!

Robert Hilton never knew exactly what happened during that awful instant. He saw a small white hand stretched forward and upward to seize the bridle, and he saw the white flutter of a handkerchief. Then came a blast of wind, and with a thundering sound the train flashed by. He slowly dismounted from his horse, which stood still, trembling in every limb, and with the white foam covering its glossy skin. He quite forgot that he was the Squire of Waldenshoe; he quite forgot all about his wide lands, and his many possessions; and in his forgetfulness he became more manly and gentle than he had been since he was a lad in his father's home, before his wild rough life had made him what he was.

He lifted his hat and stood bareheaded before the girl who had so readily and nobly sprung forward to save him from a frightful death.

"Madam, how can I thank you?"

"Very easily," was the light answer. "You ought rather to thank your own sharp bit and strong curb chain, for my strength would not have availed much without them."

"And they wouldn't have done much toward holding the brute had you not blinded his eyes with your handkerchief," he rejoined. "I owe you my life!"

"I am glad if I have been of any use;" and with a little bow the lady turned away to rejoin her companion.

"Oh, Harriet, how brave of you!" were the first words of greeting, while the children sprang forward with noisy acclamations.

"There, there, do be quiet, and let us get away from here," said Miss Cordeaux—for she it was. "Just see how the people are beginning to talk and stare. Do let us make haste home."

The lady in mourning was Mrs. Archer, Philip Walden's widowed sister, who was on a visit at the White House. She knew Harriet Cordeaux too well to speak to her any more just then. She saw, by the compressed lips and the glitter in the brown eyes, that the present moment was not one to be intruded on. So they walked silently along the road until Harriet herself broke the silence by a heavy sigh.

"What geese we women are, Amy!" she said, with a little laugh. "We are always frightened when the danger is past."

"It was very terrible," returned Mrs. Archer, turning her pale face toward Miss Cordeaux; "I can't think how you could have had the bravery to throw yourself under those terrible hoofs. It was the greatest miracle that you were not drawn over with the horse beneath the train yourself!"

"I should have let go my hold before that happened, I suppose; but there wasn't much time to calculate chances. I'm very glad I was able to save that beautiful creature from being smashed to pieces."

"And the beautiful creature's master."

"Yes, of course. I wonder who he is, Amy."

"I hardly saw him, dear. I was talking to you when he first rode in, and, when his horse began to plunge about in that fashion, I was too much alarmed to think of anything but how to drag the children out of the way. But, from the glance I had of him, I fancy he is a stranger. Could it be Mr. Hilton?" added Mrs. Archer, suddenly, as the idea occurred to her.

"No; I think papa said something about his being a little man," returned Harriet, "and this person was tall—remarkably so."

* * * * *

"You've had a narrow escape, sir," said the station-master, as he and his porters came up to congratulate the Squire. "I trust, sir, there is no harm done."

"Don't be a fool!" responded that gentleman, laconically. "Can't you see that I'm not cut into inch pieces by that express? What other harm could there have been done?"

The abashed official retreated without another word.

"Who was the lady who saved my life when not one of you fellows had nerve or pluck enough to stir anything but your own heels?" demanded Mr. Hilton of the porters. "Who was she, eh?"

"Miss Cordeaux, sir."

"Miss Cordeaux!"

"Yes, sir; the daughter of Sir John. She lives at Wynstone Hall—that place in the trees yonder."

"Oh, indeed!" and giving the man half-a-sovereign for his information, Robert Hilton left the station, the porters agreeing unanimously that he was a "queer one, the new Squire, and no mistake."

"I must call and thank her," he soliloquized, as he rode off at a slow pace. "I don't know if it's the correct thing to do—but hang the correct thing in this case! I'll call this very afternoon. She shall not think me an ungrateful dog, who won't trouble himself to say, 'Thank you' to the girl who pulled him from under the very wheels of a train—and such a girl! By Jove, how beautiful she looked!"

* * * * *

Sir John heard the account of his daughter's exploit with great satisfaction. He had learnt that morning from the steward of Waldenshoe that his master was the taller of the two gentlemen who had yesterday arrived from town; and, when Harriet spoke of the stranger she had met at the station, he felt persuaded it could be none other than Mr. Hilton. He was delighted that their acquaintance should have begun in such a highly sensational and telling manner.

"Saved his life already!" said the baronet. "I really don't see how the fellow can help proposing to her, if matters go smoothly."

Luncheon was late that day at Wynstone Hall, and the family had not yet left the table, when a footman entered with the announcement that a gentleman was in the drawing-room, and had sent his card to Miss Cordeaux.

"Mr. Hilton!" read Harriet, in accents of astonishment. "Why, mamma, what on earth possesses Mr. Hilton to call on me—to call here at all, yet?"

"He must be the hero of your railway adventure, my dear," said Sir John, "and no doubt he—"

"But, papa, you said Mr. Hilton was a little man, and dapper, and fair, while—"

"I beg your pardon," said her father, interrupting in his turn, "I said no such thing, my dear. I described the two men I saw, and you yourself ascribed to each their special distinctions. I never said which was which. Now run away, and hear what he has to say."

"You will come, mamma?"

"Certainly;" and the two ladies proceeded to the drawing-room, while Sir John remained for a minute or two to finish his claret, and to congratulate himself once more on the turn that affairs were taking.

CHAPTER IV.

"I have been searching for you everywhere, Harriet," said Philip Walden, one day late in September, as he hastily entered a summer-house at the very end of the garden at Wynstone. Miss Cordeaux was sitting there, in the shade, a book upon her lap, and her big dog Hector at her side.

"What is the matter, Philip?" she exclaimed, rising. "How strange you look! What has happened?"

"Nothing very singular as yet. But sit down again, and I will tell you what is going to happen, which will change my life very seriously, though it won't affect you or yours, Harriet; so you need not be alarmed."

"Philip—as if what affects you does not equally concern me! I mean," said she, stammering and correcting herself—"I mean that we all at Wynstone—"

He smiled sadly.

"Don't trouble yourself to put it clearly, Harry. I perfectly understand." He paused for a minute, and her eyes fell beneath his gaze. He resumed, somewhat bitterly: "I came to say good-bye, Harry. This morning I received the offer of an appointment as a kind of attaché to my mother's brother, who has a diplomatic post in the Brazils. The salary is a good one, for they have to bait out a tolerably well-gilded bait to coax people into their climate. Considering all things, I have decided to accept it. I cannot see a chance of anything better, and I must do something. I am strong as a horse, you know; mosquitoes won't kill me, and I must take my chance of fever."

He spoke with a forced lightness and calmness more indicative of emotion than tears or sobs; but she did not raise her head—she could not command herself just then; and he, all unwitting of the tumult within her breast, ascribed her silence to cold indifference.

"It is necessary for me to go up to London by the mid-day train to-morrow," he went on, "and perhaps it is best so; there will be the less time to think about it, and it is better for my mother and the girls." His voice was very husky now. He held out his hand. "My time being so short, I have only a few hours to spare for my friends. Good-bye, Harriet."

"Good-bye," she gasped. Her face was white and fixed, as of one stunned.

He took her hands in his, and crushed them in a grasp which was actual pain.

"I heard last week that you were engaged to Mr. Hilton; you will let your old playmate wish you as much happiness as is possible in the choice you have made?" And then he drew her toward him, pressed one passionate kiss upon her lips, and a moment afterward he was gone.

Harriet stood where he had left her, gazing after him with the same stunned look on her face; but when the sound of his footsteps had quite died away, she sank on the ground in a paroxysm of grief.

"He is gone, Philip, my Philip, he is gone," she repeated, "and he does not know that I love him!"

She knew her own heart at last—knew that the love she bore to Philip Walden was not the friend-love, the sister-love that he doubtless had deemed it. He was the "one other" in the world to her; and how was she to live without him?

The remembrance of his last words came back to her, inflicting keen pain on her proud, sensitive heart. Engaged to Mr. Hilton! How could he have believed that wild report? She saw now how the constant visits of the new squire, and her father's unaccountable fancy for his society, had compromised her; and she groaned aloud—

"Oh, my love, my love, it is not true! Shall I never see you again to tell you so? Oh, Philip, Philip!"

The sunlight came floating through the beeches, and crept across the threshold of the arbor, and lovingly touched the girl's hair; the soft wind stole caressingly over her cheek, touching the tear-stains with its cool breath; the song-birds poured out their melody, as if sorrow and care were all unknown in the bright and beautiful earth; but still Harriet Cordeaux lay there in all the abandonment of her first great grief.

She and Philip Walden had been children together, and on their sunny horizon no clouds had arisen to mar the brightness of their life until the change in his circumstances had come. Philip's eyes were quick to remark the change in Sir John's manner to him. He felt that he had now no right to address Miss Cordeaux, and he imagined that it would be an easy thing to crush the germs of affection in his heart. A happy life lay before Harriet, and for himself—he would make work his mistress, and duty his idol. His mother and his sisters claimed all his energy and all his thoughts—love and marriage were not for him.

Poor Philip! he soon found out his mistake. Instead of being able to crush out his love, it waxed hotter and deeper each time that he saw her bright face, each time that he heard the clear tones of her voice. Soon he ceased to struggle against it. The old heathenish motto, "What must be, must be," took hold of him. He could not help loving her; and, if the dream in which he had sometimes indulged were true—if she returned his love—why then should not Fate hold happiness for them even yet? Why should he not fight his way to the good fortune of which injustice and anger had deprived him?

This was the state of his feelings when he noticed Robert Hilton's intimacy at Wynstone Hall. He noticed, too, how Sir John encouraged him—encouraged him only because he stood in the position which was rightfully Philip's own. The wounded spirit was ready enough to credit the report he heard that his supplanter at Waldenshoe had also supplanted him in the affection of the girl he worshipped.

With a weary pain at his heart the young man left his native land to try and win for himself the gold that he cared so little for. Of what use were fame, and wealth, and honored name to him now, except for his mother's and sister's sakes. For them he would work and win yet!

And Harriet? Her step was as light as before about the corridors of the gloomy old Hall. Her songs were as sweet and musical as ever when she sang to her mother's guests; although Mr. Hilton stood behind her chair and turned the leaves of her music. Her smile and her warm words of playful affection were always ready for Sir John, and he saw no change in his favorite child. It was only her mother who noticed how her color came and went like the fitful sunshine of an April day—only her mother who remarked how thin she was growing, and how at times she would shrink apart to brood and muse as the merry, high-spirited Harriet had never been wont to do.

On the easel in the old school-room stood a large picture which she had not touched for months—a picture of the Waldenshoe woods, with the White House chimneys and the spire of the village church showing above the trees. Philip had carried the painting apparatus, the stool, the color-box, and the large shawl, as often to the slope above the angle of the park, where Harriet had been used to draw. It was Philip's hand which had cut and twisted the beechen boughs so as to form a shelter for her from the scorching sun. Philip who had run down to the brook to fill her phial with water, Philip who had with true artist's eye praised every successful effect of light and shade, and had pointed out every false or weak point in the coloring. Harriet could laugh and talk still, and ride at her father's side as gayly as ever; but she could not paint Philip's trees and Philip's home when all the sweet dreams she had woven around them had crumbled away, and left her but ghastly mocking memories to goad her to the very verge of despair.

All the world said that Miss Cordeaux was engaged to Mr. Hilton; but for once the world was wrong. It was true that the Squire was forever at Wynstone, true that he had "spoken" to Sir John, and true that he had received assurance of the baronet's warm approval; but for the life of him he could not speak to Harriet herself. With a man, Robert Hilton was never at a loss. His rough life, "knocking about" with those as rough as himself, had given him a ready tongue, and a self-reliance which rarely failed him. But with a lady the case was different. He felt instinctively that his blustering, dictatorial manner must be left outside the drawing-room door. Yet even then he had support in the thought of his position, his wealth, and other advantages. He knew that the county dames smiled on him, that their daughters dressed for him and talked to him, because of what old Hugh Walden's will had made him, and the knowledge gave him plenty of confidence in a general way. But at the drawing-room door at Wynstone even this source of courage was denied him. From the moment that he had stood bareheaded before Harriet on the platform of the railway-station, on the day that she had saved him from destruction—from that moment he could not recollect anything of his own consequence and his own grandeur in her presence. The purity and the dignity of her womanhood made a deep impression even on his coarse nature. How different she was from the other girls whom he met in the new, strange life they called society! Faintly as Mr. Hilton could appreciate the difference, even he could perceive it was there.

His vanity told him—and it did not lead him very far astray—that there was not one of the young ladies with whom he talked, and rode, and flirted but would have said "Yes" to him at once, had he offered his old mansion and broad estates for acceptance—not one, saving only Miss Cordeaux. Would she accept him? he wondered. Each day he resolved to try to solve the question by asking her point blank; but each day the calm, broad brow and the serious look in the deep eyes routed his forces completely, and weeks passed by and the momentous words remained unspoken. In his cowardice he appealed once more to Sir John.

CHAPTER V.

"Harry, my love," said the baronet one morning to his daughter, "I am going on a long expedition to Barnes's Farm; will you care to come with me? If so, we will ride."

"Oh, thank you, papa! Do we start early?"

"Yes, at ten, so as to be home by luncheon-time."

Harriet Cordeaux was an excellent horsewoman. She had been accustomed from her childhood to ride with her father and brothers—not on a tame old pony, warranted to do nothing but jog, but perched on the back of a spirited yet gentle thorough-bred, which was her own property, having been presented to her by her godfather. The thorough-bred was getting old now, yet the horse and his mistress loved and understood one another; and, even had Sir John's spare money been more plentiful than it was, it was questionable whether Harriet would have wished him to purchase her a new "mount."

She descended the steps that morning as soon as she saw the horses coming round from the stable, with an apple in her hand for her favorite; but, when the groom paused at the door, she exclaimed in amazement at perceiving that her saddle had been placed upon a horse which she had never seen before—a tall chestnut, with a splendid form and glossy skin, the very picture of a lady's steed.

"Is he not a beauty?" said her father's voice behind her.

"Indeed he is," she responded, warmly. "Why, papa, when and where did you buy him? Why didn't you tell me about it before?"

"I did not buy him at all, Harry. But, come, let me mount you. We are very late. I will explain all to you as we go along."

They started at a canter over the park, to a little hand-gate opening on to the road, and the rapid pace prevented conversation; but at the first long stretch of stony road Sir John looked at his daughter.

"Well, Harry, and how do you like the chestnut?"

"Papa, his paces are perfect. Do tell me how you got him."

"He is not mine, child. A groom brought him here yesterday, with a note saying that he was for Miss Cordeaux."

"For me? Who on earth would give me a horse now that dear old Mr. Stewart is dead?"

"Do you think that nobody cares to give you pleasure but your godfather, Harry? No; you must guess a younger man."

"What do you mean, papa?"

"I mean, Harry, that Mr. Hilton sent you that horse—and desired me to tell you that he begs you will accept it, and thereby give him a slight encouragement in the suit which he cannot screw up courage enough to pay you by word of mouth. My dear Harry, what now?"

She had brought the chestnut to a standstill, and her face was ablaze with anger which Sir John had never seen there before.

"And you allowed me to mount his horse, to give the semblance of acceptance to a man I detest! Oh, papa!"

"My dear," he said, soothingly, "pray don't be so vexed. Why should you not ride Robert Hilton's horse, when everybody knows that he would give his right hand to make you the mistress of Waldenshoe? You cannot be ignorant that he admires you, Harriet."

"But, papa, I cannot marry him."

"Don't say so. I startled and annoyed you by my blunder about that wretched beast. Do not let us say anything more about it now. Take time for consideration."

"No consideration is required. I repeat, I cannot marry him."

"Consideration is required, Harriet. It is a woman's habit always to act from impulse. Oblige me by thinking this over, and give me your answer to-morrow." His tone was grave, and even peremptory; but, he added, in a voice the affectionate pleading of which went straight to his daughter's heart—"And remember, my child, that my hair is gray, and that I cannot bear the thought of leaving my only daughter dependent on others for her bread. This marriage would remove some of my most pressing anxieties, and once more make me almost young again."

Poor Harriet had a terrible battle to fight with herself. She had fancied that she had drained her cup of bitterness to the very dregs when Philip had left her forever—left her without one word beyond that of friendship, which was worse than indifference. But now she perceived that life had deeper sorrow, harder sacrifices, and darker paths than even those which she was treading with weary feet. How was she to endure being Mr. Hilton's wife?

To this termination all her thinking tended. She paced her room that night long after the household had gone to rest; she threw herself upon her bed, and then again started up to gaze at the stars in the frosty sky. Robert Hilton's wife, chained forever to that soulless man, condemned to bear his hateful love, to smile at his broad jokes, to hear his dictatorial orders! How could she—she who had never been thwarted in all her sunny life of one-and-twenty summers—how could she suffer this?

Then her father's words came back to her. She loved him so fondly; if it would please him and brighten his old age, surely she might bear it for his sake. After all, what did it matter what became of her? The whole neighborhood believed her engaged to Mr. Hilton—Philip had believed it—why should she not be so in reality? What did it matter to her whether she lived at Waldenshoe or at Wynstone? She ought to please her father. But, if she did, Mr. Hilton should know the whole, plain, unvarnished truth, and he might then decide as he chose. The gray dawn was creeping up over the sky when at last, worn out by her mental struggle, the poor girl threw herself on her bed and slept.

* * * * *

Harriet kept her word. She told Mr. Hilton exactly what she felt toward him—that she thought it was impossible for her ever to love him, but that she did not much care what happened to her; and, if it pleased her father and mother that she should marry him, and if he, having heard her confession, really desired it, then she would be his wife.

He listened to her in blank amazement. They were in the library at Wynstone Hall, she standing by the mantel-piece, speaking as if she were repeating a lesson by rote, and he sitting in an easy-chair, glancing up at her now and then, but his eyes falling beneath the steady look in hers.

"You offer me a great temptation, Miss Cordeaux," he said, at length. "I am not cool-blooded enough, or—as you would perhaps term it—generous enough, to resist it. I love you and respect you the more for what you have said. It is true I am a rough sailor, hardly fit to touch your little hand with mine, but—but, if you will have me, I will try to be all you wish."

He rose and stood beside her on the rug. She did not shrink away from him, though she trembled visibly. He felt the prize was his at last. His impulse was to take her in his arms and press burning kisses upon her red, ripe lips, but the same look on her face which had overawed him so often quelled him now even in the moment of his triumph. He took her hand and lifted it to his lips, and then he did the very wisest thing he could have done—left the room.

Harriet did not act now as she had done on that summer morning in the arbor. She would not allow herself to think, or grieve, or feel. She waited until she heard the hall-door close, and knew that he had left the house, and then she walked into her mother's room and told her that she was engaged to marry Robert Hilton.

CHAPTER VI., AND LAST.

"My dear fellow, how are you? What has brought you to town?"

"I came to see you, Brett. The fact is, I am going to be married."

The brisk little lawyer gave Mr. Hilton's hand a hearty shake.

"I wish you all manner of joy," he said. "Who is the lady?"

"Miss Cordeaux."

"Whew! the girl who saved you from being made into mincemeat that day at the station! Very right and proper and romantic. And you want me to draw up settlements, and pilot you through Doctors' Commons, eh? Quite delighted, I'm sure."

"Stow all that—for awhile at least," returned the bridegroom elect. "I'm awfully hungry—let's go to Pim's and have a chop."

The two men passed out into the busy streets—Brett inquisitive, Hilton full of importance. He was making a good match, he said. The girl was acknowledged to be the belle of Blankshire; and her family dated back to the reign of Henry the Third. If there was a little scarcity of "tin," why, he had enough for both, and he was rather glad of the opportunity to do things handsomely.

"Take care!" shouted Mr. Brett, as they reached the corner of King William street. "This asphalte stuff has so deadened the traffic hereabouts that one never knows what's coming. Why, man, didn't you see that cab? You are not parading about your own park, you must please to recollect."

But Mr. Hilton hardly heeded him. He was talking so volubly about his future plans for the comfort and dignity of the lady of Waldenshoe that he had but little attention to spare for such a commonplace subject as London street traffic. Besides, he had a vague idea that people ought to make way for him, and not be for them; and truly his broad shoulders went on their way in a wonderfully direct manner.

* * * * *

There was a crowd gathered at the end of Cheapside that afternoon.

"What is it?" asked somebody of a policeman.

"A gentleman knocked down by an omnibus, sir," was the reply. "I fear it will go badly with him—his skull appears to be fractured."

"Poor fellow! I wonder who he is?"

The senseless form was conveyed to the nearest hospital, Mr. Brett accompanying it, to procure all that could be procured in the way of human care and skill for the Squire of Waldenshoe.

But care and skill were useless in this case. The policeman was right—the extent of the injury to the head made it impossible that there could be a single chance for his life; and long ere the night had fallen on the noisy streets of the huge town, Robert Hilton's spirit had passed away—away from the wealth he had so exulted in, away from dependants who had fawned upon him, away from friends and enemies, away from his plighted bride, out into the unknown future.

His remains were brought to Waldenshoe, and interred in the family vault. And in the church was placed a marble monument to the memory of the man whose alien name had broken in upon the long line of the Waldens whose ashes slumbered there.

Her lover's sudden death greatly appalled Harriet. It seemed so awful that the stalwart man who had left her side full of strength and life should be borne back to his home a lifeless creature, shrouded with all the gloomy paraphernalia of the grave. But she was too honest to feign grief. The three weeks of their engagement had been a time of unutterable horror to her. Since their interview in the library she had never lost the feeling that she belonged to Robert Hilton—that she was his, as his dogs and his horses were his—that she must consult his wishes, and in some measure conform to his opinions.

When the shock of his sudden death had passed away, a strong sense of relief came over her. It seemed Heaven's will that she should be saved from the dreary fate to which she had sold herself, and she was thankful. People called to condole with her; and they were greatly scandalized at finding that she had not even gone into complimentary mourning for the man whom she was so soon to have married.

"Harriet Cordeaux has always been a queer girl," they agreed amongst themselves, but this conduct really exceeds the bounds of propriety. She has no heart!"

Harriet thought so too. Her heart had died months ago, she told herself. Her life belonged to her father and her mother, to her friends, and to the poor village folk who adored her. She would live henceforth for them, and be as bright and cheerful as she could force herself to be. She would wear her smiling mask as successfully as the numb, aching pain which made earth so gray to her would allow her to do. She was not called upon to proclaim to curious ears that she had been so foolish as to love Philip Walden when Philip Walden had never asked her for her love. But, if she could conceal what she did feel, she could not pretend what she did not feel. She could mention Philip's name without a sigh; but she would not give one to the memory of Robert Hilton.

* * * * *

Great preparations were being made in the village, nine months after the accident in the London streets, to welcome home the new master of Waldenshoe.

He had remained at his post in the Brazils until some one had been found to take his place there; for he had seemed in no hurry to assume possession of the heritage of his fathers.

The bell-ringers had done their part nobly, the bonfires had blazed, and the one triumphal arch which did not get out of shape looked sufficiently graceful, and the two which did at least looked green and gay, and gave indisputable evidence of the goodwill of their makers. The tenantry assembled to escort the new Squire from the railway-station, and the bay horses pranced as they drew the carriage up the long avenue—the carriage containing a true Walden coming to enjoy his rights at last.

The Brazils had changed Philip Walden wonderfully, people said; but his gravity became him well. It was right that the Squire should be different from the enthusiastic boy whom they had known and loved in times gone by. But it had not been the Brazils which had wrought the change in him. It was the bitter memory of the sweet dream which he had dreamed in these very woods and lanes, and which he had tried in vain to forget.

* * * * *

They met often, those two who loved each other so truly, and misunderstood each other so miserably. Philip could never forget for an instant that Harriet had been Robert Hilton's promised wife—and he did not wish to forget it. She could never have cared for him, except in the old sisterly, friendly way, he thought, and he tried to cheat himself into believing that they had got back again to the familiar footing. But they were both conscious of the delusion. Poor Harriet tried bravely to treat him as she treated her own brothers, but it was weary work, and when done was an utter failure.

The Waldens still lived at the White House. Mr. Bently, a neighboring clergyman, asked Philip one day why he did not reside at Waldenshoe, as its master should do.

"Would you wish me to live in solitary state up there, like the weather-cock on the church spire?" he laughed; "My mother will never consent to leave the White House, and I choose to remain with her."

"You should marry," responded Mr. Bently, who had four blooming daughters at home.

Philip smiled slightly. "I must have time," he said.

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One day Amy Archer and Harriet were returning from their morning walk across the park, when Philip, who had been talking to his gamekeeper at the edge of the wood, moved forward to join them.

"How beautiful those autumn tints are now!" he remarked, as they reached the crest of the hill. "Did you ever finish the picture you were painting of this very view when I went away?" he added, suddenly, turning to Harriet.

"No," she replied a little confusedly.

"Why, you were extremely interested in it then! I remember how eagerly you worked at it, and how I—"

The crimson flooded over her cheeks and brow, and, although she turned her face from him, his quick eye noticed the blush and the confusion.

"Can it be that she loved me then?" he pondered.

A new light broke in on him from that moment. Even if she was lost to him, it was sweet to think that once he had been near and dear to her, that her heart had once been his, even if her ambition and her worldly wisdom had made her listen to Mr. Hilton's addresses. She was unworthy a true man's love, he repeated over and over; but how madly he loved her in spite of all his philosophy!

Some poachers had been caught in the Wynstone Woods, and great was the excitement felt among the gentlemen of the neighborhood. The nightly depredations had been carried on systematically for some time, and the gang had defied the watchers and gamekeepers of the whole district; but the arm of the law had seized them at length, if not exactly in the very act, at least preparing for its commission.

Some additional evidence had reached Philip's ears and rendered it necessary that he should consult with Sir John, as chairman of the petty sessions, immediately. He hurried through the village, and entered the grounds of Wynstone by the private gate at the end of the garden. He ran lightly over the grass, and, turning the angle of the shrubbery, came in sight of the summer-house where he had parted from Harriet more than three years ago. Did his eyes deceive him, or was she indeed there, sitting as she had then sat, an open book upon her knee, her dog lying in the sunlight at her feet? He stopped for a moment irresolute; she did not see or hear him. As he stood there, Harriet, his old child-love, seemed to return to him, and the image of Miss Cordeaux, Mr. Hilton's promised bride, faded away like a hideous dream.

He came nearer to her, over the grassy sward. "Harry!"

She started up, her eyes wet with tears.

"What is it?" she asked, hurriedly, almost in the exact words she had used on the last occasion that they had stood face to face alone. "What has happened?"

"Nothing, Harriet, except that I have lost my calm senses just for this moment. My darling—my darling!" and the next instant his arms were round her, and she was sobbing on his shoulder.

Long they stood there, beneath the shadow of the may-trees and laburnums, without another word. At length her tears had spent themselves, and she raised her face to his.

"Oh, Philip, I have always loved you!"

"Can you ever forgive my blindness, my idiotic folly, Harriet? Can you ever forgive what I have made you suffer?" he said, as he pressed his lips to her hair.

"You have suffered too."

"Oh, my love, indeed I have! Let that suffering plead for me now, and do not let it be very long before I take my wife to Waldenshoe. Speak to me, Harriet!"

And she spoke, and the words she said quite completed the scattering of Philip Walden's "calm senses," to the very great advantage of the poachers on the Wynstone grounds; for Sir John had started off for the petty sessions before Philip remembered his existence, and for lack of the important evidence the case fell through, to the great chagrin of the magistrates and to the poachers' exceeding joy.

NEW PUBLICATIONS.

SAXE HOLM'S STORIES. We are glad to see the announcement in Scribner that these are collected into a volume. They are unique in their great merit—permanent, not passing contributions to literature; and now they are in a permanent form, ready for a place of honor in a choice library of books that are books. It is enough for a writer, if he had done no other good in his day and generation than telling "How One Woman Kept Her Husband." In the deluge of so-called love stories it is welcome as the pure white dove with its message of peace. Love, the solver of difficulties; true love, the divine power that rules the world, "never faileth—beareth all things, believeth all things, hopeth all things, endureth all things." The story delineates its working with rare clearness and force. And it is enough for one human soul if he had done nothing more for his fellows than give them such a hymn as this—

THE LOVE OF GOD.

Like a cradle rocking, rocking,
Silent, peaceful, to and fro—
Like a mother's sweet looks dropping
On the little face below—
Hangs the green earth, swinging, turning,
Jarless, noiseless, safe, and slow;
Falls the light of God's face bending
Down and watching us below.

And as feeble babes that suffer,
Toss and cry, and will not rest,
Are the ones the tender mother
Holds the closest, loves the best.
So when we are weak and wretched,
By our sins weighed down, distressed,
Then it is that God's great patience
Holds us closest, loves us best.

Oh, great Heart of God! whose loving
Cannot hindered be nor crossed;
Will not weary, will not even
In our death itself be lost—
Love divine! of such great loving,
Only mothers know the cost—
Cost of love, which all love passing,
Gave a Son to save the lost.

A BOOK BY MAX ADELER. Our readers, the public at large, and the "rest of mankind," doubtless will be pleased to learn that Max Adeler has a book in preparation. It will contain nearly 200 "superb" illustrations, and any amount of humor. A person who ought to know writes us that "It is going to sell." Of course it is—that is Max's idea in getting it out. That and sheer, disinterested philanthropy. For Max believes that if he can set people to laughing, they will lose their appetite for quarrelling, as well as improve their appetite for meat and potatoes. Max is one of those men who do everything on great principles.

WHAT NAME?

An exercise of the *Vox Humana* recently occurred at the Boston Post Office that was a little more amusing than musical.

An individual stepped up to the general delivery window, and, in a somewhat subdued tone, asked:

"Any letters for me?"

"What name, sir?" said the clerk in attendance.

"Watt," replied the applicant.

"What name?" repeated the clerk, in a still louder tone.

"Watt, sir."

"What *name*?" shouted the clerk still louder, growing red in the face in his effort.

"Watt, sir, is my name," now shouted the applicant, in return.

"Yes," responded the man of letters, putting in all the power of lungs he possessed, and shouting like a new adjutant at the head of a raw regiment—"what is your name, sir?"

"Yes, I know it is," now screamed the other, red and excited. "Do you mean to keep me yelling at you all day in this manner? Give me my letters."

By this time two or three clerks inside the window had come to the rescue of their comrade, and a small crowd had gathered round the excited letter-seeker outside, who was shaking his fist, and denouncing the Post Office Department for placing a deaf man at the delivery window.

"What do you mean by calling me deaf?" said the clerk, who overheard this last remark.

"Why, you are deaf, a'n't you?" asked his customer.

"Not a bit of it," said the clerk; but *you* are, a'n't you?"

"No, sir. I can hear a whisper a mile off."

"Then why did you keep saying 'What?' when I asked your name?"

"Because Watt is my name—James Watt."

"Oh, I thought you said 'what' all the time," said the clerk.

"So I did; W-A-T-T, Watt."

At this, a fellow-clerk suggested that they had better give old Watt's-his-name his letters; which was done, and the crowd, including several disappointed individuals who were in anticipation of a fight, instead of a laugh, dispersed.—*Com. Bulletin.*

Dr. Lord's Historical Lectures.

We call the attention of our readers to the course of Historical Lectures now being delivered by Dr. Lord at Concert Hall, Chestnut street, above Twelfth. The success which attended his series last winter upon "Modern Civilization" has encouraged him to give another course of twenty-five lectures on the "Great Fathers of the Church and the Saints and Heroes of the Middle Ages." The subjects are of peculiar value both to ladies and gentlemen who are not supposed to be familiar with this epoch of history, and who have not time to study carefully the standard authorities. These lectures, which are closely connected, and which allude to all that is vital in Mediæval History, though intended for ladies, are open to the public generally. They are given every Tuesday and Friday at 12 o'clock. Tickets for the remaining 19 lectures, with reserved seat, $10.

☞ Thomas Bailey Aldrich puts it gently to the shoddyites in this wise: "One is pained to find that the most exclusive folks have frequently passed their early manhood in selling tape or West India goods in homœopathic quantities. This is not an immoral thing in itself, but it is certainly illogical in these people to be so intolerant of those less fortunate ones who have not yet disposed of their stock."

THE AMAZON.

A voyage on the Amazon, writes an American traveller, is excessively monotonous. A vast volume of smooth, yellow water, floating trees and green grass, low, linear-shaped islets, a dark, even forest, the shore of a boundless sea of verdure, and a cloudless sky, with occasional flocks of screaming parrots—these are the general features. No busy towns are seen along the banks; only here and there a palm hut or Indian village, half buried in the wilderness. No mountains break the horizon—only half a dozen table-topped hills—and while many bluffs of red and yellow clay are visible, they are exceptional, the usual border being low alluvial deposits, magnificently wooded, but half the year covered with water. The real grandeur, however, of a great river like this is derived from reflecting upon its prospective commercial importance and immense drainage.

A lover of nature, moreover, can never get tired of gazing at the picturesque grouping and variety of trees, with their mantles of creeping plants; the wild, unconquered race of vegetable giants; the "reckless energy of vegetation," compared with which the richest woods on the Hudson are a desert; the dense canopy of green supported by crowded columns, branchless for fifty or eighty feet; the parasites and undergrowth struggling for life; the broad-leaved bananas and gigantic grasses; the colossal nut and pod-bearing trees; and, above all, the hundreds of species of palms, each vieing with the other in beauty and grace.

Health's Shield and Protection.—Health is universally admitted to be the most desirable of earthly blessings, yet it is jeopardized as recklessly as if it were of no value at all. Thousands who are compelled by their occupations and pursuits to breathe unwholesome air, to expose themselves to violent alternations of heat and cold, and to brave other evils inimical to health and life, utterly neglect to fortify themselves against the dangers which surround them by a proper course of tonic treatment. For many years it has been a public fact, undenied even by the martinets of the medical profession, that HOSTETTER'S STOMACH BITTERS is the best antidote to malaria and the finest acclimating medicine in existence. In fever and ague districts, in tropical and other regions visited by epidemics, and indeed in all localities where the conditions are unfavorable to health, this famous vegetable invigorant and alterative has been found a potent safeguard even to feeble constitutions and fragile frames; while as a cure for indigestion, biliousness and all kindred complaints it is confessedly without a rival.

TREATING THE WRONG DISEASE.

Many times women call upon their family physicians, one with dyspepsia, another with palpitation, another with trouble of the breast, another with pain here and there, and in this way they all present alike to themselves and their easy-going and indifferent doctors, separate and distinct diseases, for which he prescribes his pills and potions, assuming them to be such, when in reality they are all symptoms caused by some uterine disorder; and while they are thus only able, perhaps, to palliate for a time, they are ignorant of the cause, and encourage their practice until large bills are made, when the suffering patients are no better in the end, but probably worse for the delay, treatment, and other complications made, and which a proper medicine directed to the cause would have entirely removed, thereby instituting health and comfort instead of prolonged misery.

From Miss LORINDA E. ST. CLAIR, Shade, Athens Co., O., Oct. 14, 1872:

"Dr. R. V. Pierce, Buffalo, N. Y.—Your Favorite Prescription is working almost like a miracle on me. I am better already than I have been for over two years."

From ELLA A. SCHAFER, Zanesville, Ind., Aug. 3, 1872:

"Dr. Pierce—I received the medicine you sent me and began using it immediately. As a result of the treatment I feel better than I have for three years."

From Mrs. JOHN K. HAMLIN, Odell, Ill., March 19, 1872:

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PHILADELPHIA, SATURDAY, FEB. 14, 1874.

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LETTERS FROM ZIG.

CONCERNING SORROWS.

It is astonishing how full this world is of people who make a nuisance of their grief. I am fully convinced that at least three-fourths of all the women I know think they have had more trouble to bear than anybody else in the world. They make of their sorrows a scape-goat to bear all the sins they have committed in the past, or intend to commit in the future—a peg to hang all their ill-temper and deceitfulness upon—and an excuse for petting themselves and expecting everybody they know to pet them. That's just how it is with ever so many women whom I know, and I'm out of patience about it, so I am.

There isn't a single grief or grievance in this world which is worth carrying a long face down to one's grave about. A settled grief is such an awful nuisance about a house, when you come to think of it—like sitting down to the table with a skeleton, or going to bed with a tombstone, or something of that sort. To think that however bright the sun may shine, however the birds may sing, however merrily the rippling, sparkling brook may go dancing by, the very calves in the fields kicking up their little heels for joy, and all the face of nature as jolly as an oyster, your person afflicted with a chronic grief is as melancholy as a half-open coffin. The very faces of dozens of people, particularly women, whom you meet in this world, make you think of coffins and tombstones and lantern-jawed corpuses.

I say I don't believe in chronic griefs, and I particularly desire 'em to keep away from me. The lady who had the most real trouble of anybody I ever knew in my life, was about the jolliest, sunshiniest person I ever knew. In her youth, she was the petted, tenderly-reared child of fortune. When I knew her she was so poor that she had been obliged to resort to that last, desperately thin plank lying between the human stomach and starvation—she kept a boarding-house and was her own cook and chambermaid. She had had a beautiful mother and sisters whom she loved passionately—a wasting, lingering death had taken them from her, one by one. She had had a precious family of lovely little children, dearer to her than her own life; death had stripped her of nearly all these. Poor, bereft of her beloved, lonely, far away from the friends of her youth, what yet remained to make her cup of bitterness run over? She only needed one affliction more—a lazy, worthless, dirty, drunken Satan of a husband, and she had just that. He was cruel as a fiend when he was drunk, and jealous and sullen as a gorilla when he was sober, and a perfect old Turk in general, and yet she clothed his worthless body and filled his vile stomach for him year after year, and nobody knew how her heart ached. The old reprobate used to commit suicide regularly about once a month, just to frighten his wife. He would take poison when he was sure there was a doctor real near, and then hand his wife a letter all cut and dried, written before he took the poison, mind you, bidding her farewell in a high old howl, and telling her he had put a tragical end to himself in consequence of her cruel treatment of him. Then the poor wife would send off in hot haste for the doctor, and have the old villain pumped out forthwith, and by next morning he would be all right side up, cosy and comfortable, and no harm done beyond making an infinite mess around the house, and making his distracted wife lose her sleep for a night or two. Next afternoon he would go off, and toward night come in roaring drunk, with, maybe, his lovely countenance mashed to a jelly and two or three eyes knocked out, in consequence of having indulged in the little luxury of a street fight. As soon as he was fairly well of that, the old scoundrel would up and commit suicide again. So it went on, year in and year out.

I used to wonder how the much be-devilled wife lived at all, and yet there was that blessed woman as cheery and bright as the sunshine itself. She said she had formed the habit of not thinking about her troubles, otherwise she would have gone stark crazy. She pieced out the little enjoyments of her dreary life, and made much of them; her woes and sorrows she wouldn't allow herself to think about at all. She never lost her child-like capacity for happiness, but kept her heart young and warm through years of sorrow and of living with an old beast of a husband.

It is such a grand thing to keep all through life the keen, intense power of enjoying which we all have when we are children. It is much, very much for a middle-aged person to admire a thing with all his might, just as he did when he was a child, to love his friends and appreciate and enjoy life with all the glorious enthusiasm of childhood. This glorious enthusiasm of childhood keeps even the old man's and old woman's heart young forever and evermore. It would be almost better for us to die when we lose that, I think.

At any rate we'd be spared the sight of a lot of long-faced women who go through life with their mouths down at the corners, and their souls down at the heel. An old woman was at our house the other day who had a sick son. She said he'd been took five years ago with the chronic disease, and, continues the old woman,

"An' he's ben kind o' chronicky ever sence."

Just so. The excellent female women whom I mean were attacked with a chronic grief five or ten or twenty years ago, and they've been "kind o' chronicky ever sence." They fall into the habit of thinking the world has misused 'em, that they're not so rich as a person of their rare, good qualities deserves, that people don't have the sympathy for 'em that folks who have suffered their doubled-and-twisted griefs ought to receive. And all this has had such a strain upon their nerves that it has brought their nerves into a condition. I wish there wasn't a nerve in the world! I tell you I actually know women who are fat and well and rosy, and haven't a real grief in the world, who sigh their way through life like a singing tea-kettle, and fairly bore the heads of their acquaintances with the story of their sorrows. They pet themselves from morning till night, and take it very ill if everybody else doesn't pet them too. If you scold them for being ill-natured, or silly, or lazy, they take refuge in their nerves straightway. Their lovely eyes fill with tears, their sweet lips begin to quiver, and they begin to snuffle, and presently they whine:

"You don't know what I've had to endure!"

I have such an awful horror of folks who have had things to endure. They are dreadfully disagreeable people to have in a house, somehow. When they come whining about my ears, from time to time, they impress me exactly like the sound of a jewsharp, and it always sets my teeth on edge to hear a jewsharp.

Life isn't long enough to spend it in brooding over troubles. Life isn't long enough to be spent in whining. The whiners who magnify their griefs and pet their contemptible little troubles lose all the joy of existence, and make their friends and relations lose it all too. They ought to be choked off—and ought to be ashamed of themselves besides. I hate to hear women whine, either about their nerves or their troubles. I say they have no business to worry other folks with their microscopic miseries.

So let us don't do it. Let us strive evermore after a great spirit and a busy life. If our troubles are great, let us think of something else, and fight them off. If they are small, don't let us notice 'em at all. Let us try by all means in our power to make this life full of sunshine and hope. Because life isn't very long at the best.

ZIG.

A BEGGAR KING.

BY MAURICE F. EGAN.

Not long since the present writer happened to come across a rather singular and amusing book. Its title was the "Life and Adventures of Bamfylde Moore Carew, King of the Mendicants." From its style, it appears to have been written in the latter part of the last century; but the arduous attempts which the author makes to turn his crow into a swan—his rascally hero into a benevolent philanthropist—are equal to the skilful efforts of some of our modern novelists in the same line.

But the writer of this book was a biographer, not a novelist. Bamfylde Moore Carew really existed and played his part in life. He was a son of the rector of Brickley parish, in Devon, England. The pedigree of the Carews was one of the longest in the country, and among their connections were numbered many families of rank and influence.

Bamfylde Moore, named after his "illustrious and honorable" godfathers, was born in July, 1693. This noble and illustrious pair for some time contended which should be the president, "doubtless presaging," says the biographer, "the honor which should redound to them from the future actions of our hero."

When old enough, he was sent to Tiverton school, where under the rule of Mr. Baynor, he attained small Latin and less Greek. Preferring the exercise of hunting to exercises in the dead languages, he added to his other accomplishments the art of enticing any dog to follow him, and a peculiar cheering halloo to the hounds.

A neighboring farmer, who sometimes followed the chase with the scholars of Tiverton, came and informed them that a deer with a collar on its neck had been noticed near his land. This news delighted the scholars, and on an appointed day, shortly before harvest time, they sat out in a body with Carew at their head, to hunt the deer. They chased the animal for many miles, doing great damage to the fields of standing grain. The deer was killed, and by the inscription on the collar found to be the property of Colonel Nutcombe, of the parish of Claybanger.

We may fancy the consternation of the offenders on the day succeeding the hunt, when the irate colonel accompanied by a crowd of vengeance-breathing farmers made their appearance at Tiverton school.

Carew and four companions fled from the school, and fell in with a band of gypsies. The gypsies were carousing at a public house, and the late scholars were received with music, dancing, and "flowing cups of October cider." The next morning, probably before the fumes of the cider and stronger drink had left their brains, they were sworn as members of the roving band.

Carew was an apt imitator of gypsy manners and customs. Soon after his admission into the band he was consulted by a certain Mrs. Musgrove, of Monkton, in relation to the whereabouts of hidden treasure. After apparent long toil and study, he informed his questioner that the treasure lay under a laurel tree in her garden, but that fortune would not be propitious until a certain day and hour. The credulous woman was overjoyed. She gave Carew twenty guineas, and waited impatiently for the time he had named. The hour came. The roots of the laurel were laid bare, but no buried gold delighted the eyes of Mrs. Musgrove. Through the silent night the digging continued, until the delvers, like the medical students in Max Adeler's story, concluded that the object of their search was *non est*—and so was Carew.

Carew's parents did everything in their power to induce him to return home. He did so at last, and the fatted calf was killed in his honor. "But," says his biographer, "the uncommon pleasure he had enjoyed in the community he had left, the freedom of the gypsies' government, the simplicity and sincerity of their manners, the frequent changes of their habitation, the perpetual mirth and good humor that reigned among them, and perhaps some secret presages of the high honor (?) which he afterward arrived at,—all these made too deep an impression to be effaced by other ideas."

This high honor was his election to fill the place of Claude Patch, the "good old king" of the gypsies, who died full of age and wiles, greatly lamented by his eighteen children.

Carew, the new king, possessed a Protean power of changing his appearance. The revenue he earned in the character of a mendicant must have been very considerable. At times he was a plain country farmer, whose land had been overflowed and all his cattle drowned; a maniac; a sailor, who had been shipwrecked; in short, he assumed and acted any character to the life, and generally succeeded in raising compassion and funds at the same time.

He visited Newfoundland, and about this time "our hero became sensible of the power of love." While undisguised and making a very gentlemanly appearance he met a Miss Gray, whose father was a well-known surgeon in Newcastle. He pretended to be the mate of a vessel. Though the young lady fell in love with the pretended mate, her father declined to do so, and the pair fled and were married at Bath. The bride was disagreeably surprised to discover the disreputable profession of Carew, but she resoved to make the best of it—which was very bad indeed.

Love, however, we are informed, did not restrain his propensity for roving. Among other places, he visited Philadelphia, which, we are told, "is one of the finest cities in all America, and one of the best laid-out cities in the world. It is the capital of Pennsylvania, and, were it full of houses, according to the Proprietor's plan, it would be a capital fit for a great empire. This city flourished so much at first, that there were near a hundred houses in it, great and small, in less than a year's time; the number of houses at this time being about two thousand."

Our hero managed to obtain a guinea from Proprietor Penn, and various sums from the principal merchants by suiting his story to his hearer. Having profitably used his time in the New World, he returned to the old, and resumed his royal dignity, which he finally resigned, having grown old in wickedness and deceit.

He was enabled, by the bequest of a deceased relative, to purchase a house in the country, where "he lived respected best by those who knew him best," concludes the admiring and virtuous writer of his life.

OPINIONS OF THE PRESS.

[From the "Delta," Avoca, Iowa, Jan., 1874.]

The first number of the SATURDAY EVENING POST for 1874 is on our table. As a family and miscellaneous paper it has no equal in the United States. The class of writers employed are far superior to any other publication of its kind on this continent. They are the best in the literary world of to-day. The contents of this issue we have seldom seen excelled, comprising, as it does, thrilling stories for the family circle, news, poetry, notes, wit, answers to correspondents, etc., that render it at once the most fascinating literary paper in the world.

[From the "Gazette," Harrisville, West Virginia, Jan., 1874.]

THE SATURDAY EVENING POST is the largest of the literary weeklies, and certainly takes rank among the best. It has been in existence more than fifty years, and is still as fresh and vigorous as it could have been in its youthful days. The attractions of the POST are numerous. It contains serials, short stories, sketches, &c., by the best writers. Max Adeler, the humorist, contributes "Observations" every week. Those of our readers desiring abundant entertainment for the long winter evenings should subscribe at once for the POST.

[From the "Clipper," Brownsville, Pa., Jan., 1874.]

"SATURDAY EVENING POST."—This old and popular family paper, having figured and thrived in the sunshine of public favor for the last half century, it is a somewhat difficult task to describe any merit, peculiarity or feature of interest with which the public is not already familiar. Had not its matter and make-up been interesting as well as instructive, and instructive as well as interesting, and that happily combined character of the paper been sustained and approved by the good taste and good judgment of its thousands of readers, it would have gone by the board forty years ago. Indeed, what stronger evidence of its merits, as a family paper, is needed than the fact that it has lived and flourished and progressed and improved for fifty years continuously, and enjoys to-day a popularity as a chaste, interesting and instructive family visitor, second to none in this country, if in the world.

[From the "Star," Nowville, Pa., Jan., 1874.]

A GOOD PAPER.—Among the most valuable exchanges which reach us we find few that equal and none that supersedes that old-time journal which has so long spread before young and old its pages of cheery reading. We mean the SATURDAY EVENING POST. Many of us recollect how in our younger days we so impatiently waited for its welcome arrival and sought its pages, and how we fell into a state of obliviousness to all other surroundings by reason of it. Its contributors have ranked among the best in the country, and just now Max Adeler, the great humorist, is entertaining us with his side-splitting and outrageous stories.

[From the "Independent," Saco, Maine.]

SATURDAY EVENING POST.—We have before called the attention of our readers to the above excellent weekly. Yet now at the commencement of a new year we cannot forbear referring to it again. Undisputedly ahead of all the rest of its class, its proprietors are determined to keep it the best. Mary Atherstone Bird begins in this week's number a novelet of English life, entitled, "The Ghost of Norman Park; or, Two Women Wronged." As we have said before, so we now say, THE POST is the best paper in America, and all should subscribe now.

[From the "Banner," Bedford, Ind.]

The old SATURDAY EVENING POST still holds the first rank among the literary weeklies of the United States. It has been published for over half a century. We would advise those who wish to subscribe for a first-class literary paper, to take the Post.

[From the "Courier," Newark, N. Y.]

THE SATURDAY EVENING POST, as we have said before, is one of the very best weeklies published, and the high appreciation of its merits is indicated by the fact that those who try it once, almost always continue taking it year after year. We cheerfully commend it to our readers.

Look Before You Leap.

Almost any error in life may be remedied save an error in marriage. If a man make a mistake in one thing, he can rectify it by doing right about another; if one mine be unproductive, or one field barren, he can try for gold in some fresh direction—it is competent for him to turn up the sods of distant acres, and plant and reap there; but to find you have chosen wrongfully in marriage, is as when a man discovers, just as his sun is close upon setting, that he has erred through life. There is no retracing either road, there is no getting rid either of the spent existence or of the lawful wife; the day is gone, the decision made beyond recall; and unhappy indeed is he who finds that he has taken the wrong turning.

OUR NEW CHROMO.

Ella Wheeler, the gifted young Wisconsin poetess, says:—

"I came home, and found your beautiful Chromo awaiting me. It is the personification of purity and beauty. I shall have it elegantly framed and hung in my room at once."

Another friend writes:—

"*My Dear Post*:—Again you have surpassed all my anticipations, with the exquisite loveliness of your Premium Chromo. For though I knew full well that you would never offer an inferior picture, with such a paper as our dear old 'POST,' the acknowledged queen of the 'weeklies,' yet I was scarcely prepared for such a vision of beauty and joy as beams forth from every line and feature of that roguish little face, and the equally lovely mother. What a darling, dimpled little urchin he is, with his cherub smile, and face fairly aglow with mischief, as he crowns with loving joy, her who is to him, indeed 'the fairest among women.'

"And that fresh young mother—with her crown of motherhood, worth a thousand of earth's regal diadems—how supremely happy she is! And how perfect the physical development, telling of a health and purity and happiness born only of the recognition and observance of the laws of true womanhood.

"I trust this beautiful picture of life's crowning joy, will shed its hallowed influence over every heart and home in our broad land; and the subscription list of the dear old POST be a thousandfold increased. With thanks and good wishes,

"Very truly yours,

"F. R. F."

YOUNG WOMEN IN SPAIN.

In the lower walks of life the Spanish maiden is absolutely a prisoner—the prisoner of her madre, or her "tia," or aunt—until a kind Providence gives her a husband. No Spanish maiden, however poor, or however low her rank, can ever walk alone in the street, even a few paces; if she does so, her character is gone. She cannot go out to service unless her madre or tia be in the same service; and hence all the "criadas," or maid servants, are widows, who are allowed to have their children in their master's house, under their own eye; or unmarried over forty.

The Spanish maiden has her choice of only two walks of life, until married life and a husband's protection become her own. Up to the time of her marriage she may either, if her father and mother be alive, go to a tailor's shop each day, returning at night, thus earning a few pence a day, and learning a trade. She is escorted thither and homeward by her mother, whose tottering steps and gray hairs often contrast strangely with the upright carriage and stately walk of the daughter by her side. While at work during the day she is under the care of the "maestro," or master tailor, who sits among his bevy of fair maidens at the open door and superintends their work. All the "tailoring" is done in this way. You first of all buy the amount of cloth you need at a linen draper's; it is then taken to a tailor's house, and he takes your measure, and reports upon the amount and fitness of the cloth, and sets his maidens to work. A good Spanish servant, if you get a tailor to cut the cloth, will thus, at odd hours, make a capital suit of clothes.

If the Spanish maiden, however, has a mother who is a widow, or who has no settled home with her husband, and is for this cause obliged to go out to service to earn her bread, the maiden will probably be with her mother, and, receiving little or no wages, take an idle share in the household duties, and receive each evening—of course in her madre's presence—the visits of her lover, who, after his day's work is over, saunters idly, cigarillo in hand, into the kitchen which contains his Isidora, Maria, or Isabel—for these girls have very fine names—and performs his courting. The mother's watchful eye and ear are ever open, and the mother herself ever at hand. As to saying a single word, or, at least, having a walk or a good English "chat" alone, the young couple never dream of such a thing. To so great an extent is this system of motherly surveillance carried that, should you call the mother away for a few minutes, she will not leave the young couple alone, but will order the young man to go out for some trifling article, or call the daughter to her side, that they may not have a private talk. This seems strange, unnatural, and unneeded. The mother, during this period, treats her daughter quite like a child. If she does wrong, no matter though she be on the eve of marriage, the mother administers a sound beating with her fists, and sometimes even a sound kicking.

"Upon my word," said a pretty Spanish maiden thus situated to me, "I really begin to think my mother is a bad old woman for beating me so."

The Spanish mother has no idea of trusting her daughters; nor do they ever attempt the least religious or moral culture. Their system is to prevent any impropriety simply by external precautions. And I must say that the majority of poor girls, when led to the altar, would present a marked contrast in purity to an equal number of our English agricultural laborers' daughters. In Spain the daughter's purity is the mother's highest pride. Mother and daughter, though constantly quarrelling, and even coming to blows, are very fond of each other; and the old woman, when they go out shopping together, will carry the heavy basket, or oesta, under the burning sun, that she may not spoil her daughter's queenly walk; her dull eye, too, will grow moist with a tear, and her worn face kindle with absolute softness and sweetness, if an English senor express his admiration of her child's magnificent hair or flashing black eyes. The poor old mother, too, will save and save; she will deny herself her morsel of "carne," or meat, and her little "copa" of wine on feast-days (and these poor creatures' luxuries are few indeed at best), that she may buy a ring or ear-rings of gold to grace her daughter at the "Feria," and shame her rivals.

The moment, however, that the daughter is married, all this is at an end. The mother, to use a vulgar but very expressive phrase, "washes her hands of" her care. From the moment of the completion of the marriage ceremony, the mother declines all responsibility, seldom goes to her daughter's house, and treats her almost as a stranger.

Among the higher classes, although different in kind, the treatment of the young unmarried maiden is almost as strict. She, too, like her humbler sister, can never have the privilege of seeing her lover in private, and very rarely indeed, if ever, is he admitted into the sala where she is sitting. He may contrive to get a few minutes' chat with her through the barred windows of her sala; but when a Spaniard leads his wife from the altar, he knows no more of her character, attainments and disposition, than does the priest who marries them, and perhaps not so much. Happiness, under such circumstances, can hardly be expected as a rule—and yet the married life of the Spaniard, if not brilliantly happy, seems at least calmly peaceful. The pleasures of husband and wife lie in different directions, and each leaves the other free to follow out and enjoy them, as he or she best can. They are not much together again, and in sunny Spain there is no fireside gathering—indeed there are no fireplaces, only "braseros" of charcoal—to bring husband and wife together in sustained intercourse.

There is a very striking law in Spain, the very existence of which proves better than any words of mine the strictness with which the Spanish maiden is guarded, and the absolute authority of her parents. Its provisos are these: Should a Spanish lad and lassie become attached to one another, and the parents absolutely forbid the match and refuse their daughter liberty and permission to marry, the lover has his remedy at law. He has but to make a statement of the fact on paper, deposit it, signed and attested, with the Alcade, or mayor, of the township in which the lady's parents dwell. The Alcade then makes an order, giving the young man the right of free entry into the house in question within a certain number of days, for the purpose of wooing and carrying off his idol. The parents dare not interfere with the office of the Alcade, and the lady is taken to her lover's arms. From that moment he, and he alone, is bound to provide for her; by his own act and deed she has become his property. Cases have happened where the parents' judgment has been proved, by the bitter experience of their unhappy child, to have been the best; the would-be husband having turned out to be a deceiver. But the law comes upon him with all its force, and he is bound to maintain her in every way as a wife, under pain of punishment.

THE CARVER.

BY R. H. STODDARD.

The carver thought, the carver wrought,
There was a rapture in his mood;
He saw Our Lady in his thought,
And wrought upon the sandal wood.
His hand would not obey his will,
It faltered and forgot its skill,
"No one will say who sees that face,
'Hail! Mary mother, full of grace!'"

He dropped his tools, he bowed his head,
He heard a voice that somewhere spoke:
"To burn the sandal-wood," it said,
"And work upon that block of oak.
What one holds not the other may,
The image may be there to-day."
It was, and all who saw her face
Said: "Mary Mother, full of grace!"

Thoughts From George Eliot.

Do we not all agree to call rapid thought and noble impulse by the name of inspiration? After our subtlest analysis of the mental process, we must still say that our highest thoughts and our best deeds are all given to us.

There is a sort of fascination in all sincere unpremeditated eloquence, which opens to one the inward drama of the speaker's emotions.

The existence of insignificant people has very important consequences in the world. It can be shown to affect the price of bread and the rate of wages, to call forth many evil tempers from the selfish and many heroisms from the sympathetic, and, in other ways, to play no small part in the tragedy of life.

All honor and reverence to the divine beauty of form! Let us cultivate it to the utmost in men, women and children—in our gardens and in our houses. But let us love that other beauty too, which lies in no secret of proportion, but in the secret of deep human sympathy. Paint us an angel, if you can, with a floating violet robe, and a face paled by the celestial light; paint us yet oftener a Madonna, turning her mild face upward and opening her arms to welcome the divine glory; but do not impose on us any æsthetic rules which shall banish from the region of art those old women scraping carrots with their work-worn hands, those heavy clowns taking holiday in a dingy pot-house, those rounded backs and stupid weather-beaten faces that have bent over the spade and done the rough work of the world—those homes with their tin pans, their brown pitchers, their rough curs, and their clusters of onions. In this world there are so many of these common, coarse people who have no picturesque sentimental wretchedness! It is so needful we should remember their existence, else we may happen to leave them quite out of our religion and philosophy, and frame lofty theories which only fit a world of extremes. Therefore let art always remind us of them; therefore let us always have men ready to give the loving pains of a life to the faithful representing of commonplace things—men who see beauty in these commonplace things, and delight in showing how kindly the light of Heaven falls on them. There are few prophets in the world, few sublimely beautiful women, few heroes. I can't afford to give all my love and reverence to such rarities; I want a great deal of those feelings for my every-day fellow-men, especially for the few in the foreground of the great multitude, whose faces I know, whose hands I touch, for whom I have to make way with kindly courtesy. Neither are picturesque lazzaroni or romantic criminals half so frequent as your common laborer who gets his own bread, and eats it vulgarly but creditably with his own pocket-knife. It is more needful that I should have a fibre of sympathy connecting me with that vulgar citizen who weighs out my sugar in a vilely assorted cravat and waistcoat, than with the handsomest rascal in red scarf and green feathers—more needful that my heart should swell with loving admiration at some trait of gentle goodness in the faulty people who sit at the same hearth with me, or in the clergyman of my own parish, who is perhaps rather too corpulent, and in other respects is not an Oberlin or a Tillotson, than at the deeds of heroes whom I shall never know save by hearsay, or at the sublimest abstract of all clerical graces that was ever conceived by an able novelist.

Male Gossips.

Says T. B. Aldrich: "If it comes to a matter of pure gossip, I would back our club against the Sorosis or any women's club in existence. Whenever you see in our drawing-room four or five young fellows lounging in easy-chairs, cigar in hand, and now and then bringing their heads together over the small round Japanese table, which is always the pivot of these social circles, you may be sure they are discussing Tom's engagement, or Dick's extravagance, or Harry's hopeless attachment for the younger Miss Fleurdelys. It is here that old Tippleton gets execrated for that everlasting *bon mot* of his which was quite a success at dinner parties forty years ago; it is here the belle of the season passes under the scalpels of the merciless young surgeons; it is here B.'s financial condition is handled in a way that would make B.'s hair stand on end; it is here, in short, that everything is canvassed—much that never happens, and a great deal that could not possibly happen."

OLD MUSIC.

There is an air for which I would disown
Mozart's, Rossini's, Weber's melodies;
A sad sweet air that languishes and sighs,
And keeps its secret charm for me alone.

Where'er I hear that music vague and old—
Two hundred years are "mist that rolls away"—
The thirteenth Louis reigns, and I behold
A green land, golden in the dying day;

An old red castle, strong with stony towers,
The windows bright with many-colored glass;
Wide plains, and streamlets flowing among flowers,
That wash the castle basement as they pass.

In antique weed, with dark eyes and gold hair,
A lady looks forth from her casement high;
It may be that I knew and found her fair
In some forgotten life long time gone by.

OBSERVATIONS.

BY MAX ADELER.

—Out in Toledo, Ohio, the other day, a well known citizen received a box which, upon being opened, exploded. It was an infernal machine, sent to him by an enemy. Of course everybody has been scary since then, and the impression prevails that this kind of thing is becoming too common. Mr. Conroy of Toledo received another one last week. The express company brought to his house a small wooden box, and he knew at the first glance that it was an infernal machine. He carried it out in the most gingerly manner to the yard and placed it on the bottom of an inverted bucket. Then he bought ten pounds of gunpowder and placed it under the bucket and laid a train of powder about 100 yards to the door of the kitchen. Then Conroy lit a match in the kitchen, and after lighting the train he dodged in quickly and closed the door. The whole family stood at the window to see the infernal machine explode. It did so with terrific violence, and the next moment there was a ring at the door bell. It was the postman. He brought a letter from Mrs. Conroy's aunt, informing her that she had just sent her a box full of jars of raspberry-jam and mince-meat. In an agony of dread, Conroy rushed out to the scene of the explosion. He found mincemeat and fragments of glass lying around the yard, while raspberry-jam was smeared all over the door of the wood-house. The manner in which Mrs. Conroy carried on about her aunt's preserves is said to have been dreadful; but Conroy maintains a dignified silence. It pains him to hear the slightest reference to raspberry-jam and mince-meat.

—Our neighbors, the Briggses, have had trouble with their hired-girl. She arrived in this country only last month, and she had never seen gas used in houses. The first night of her stay at Briggs', the family smelt gas strongly after her retirement, and upon going to the room found that she had blown the light out. Mrs. Briggs woke her and showed her how to turn it off properly. But the next night fearing to trust her, Mrs. Briggs gave her a candle to go to bed by. About midnight Mrs. Briggs woke, and looking out, she saw that the light was still burning brightly in the girl's room. She went up to ascertain what was the matter. She found that the girl, after spending an hour trying to extinguish the candle by fumbling with the gas cock was now endeavoring to turn off the candle by twisting the handle of the candlestick. They think of giving her a dollar a week more than they promised her because she knows less than they thought she did. Hired girls' wages always increase in proportion as their intelligence diminishes.

—Chubb is an unfortunate man. He is bald, and he uses some "renovator" every night before going to bed for the purpose of making his hair grow. He forgot it on Wednesday until after he was in bed, and then he rose, and as he knew just where the bottle was, he thought it was hardly worth while to strike a light. He groped around in the closet until he found the bottle, and pouring out some of the stuff into his hand he rubbed his scalp well with it; after doing this a second time he put the bottle back and went to bed. During the night the baby got to crying, and Mrs. Chubb rose and lit the gas; as soon as she did so she glanced at Chubb and began to scream. He woke and tried to rise but found his head held firmly to the bolster. Then Mrs. Chubb screamed louder than ever. Chubb, in serious alarm, jumped out of bed carrying the bolster with him in his arms. As he came opposite the mirror he perceived that his head was perfectly black, and upon making an examination he found that he had rubbed his scalp with his wife's shoe varnish. It was dry and hard and immovably fixed to the bolster-case. He has not been out of the house since. He soaks his head three times a day in warm water, and still it has patches of black distributed all over it, like oases in the desert. But this doesn't worry Mrs. Chubb as much as the condition of the bolster-case. That is ruined. It had to be cut away so as to give Chubb freedom.

—Deadheadism can sometimes be carried too far. A young lady in Georgia, while attending a fair, endeavored to raise money for the undertaking by offering to permit male visitors to kiss her at ten cents a kiss. Everything proceeded smoothly until the editor of the daily paper came in, and he insisted upon taking kisses free because he was a member of the press. They put him out. This is probably the same man who, when he was married, wanted the clergyman to take his wedding fee out in advertising, and gave as a present to his bride a double-barrelled gun which he won at a raffle in which he had three dead-head chances.

—Ours is the most exciting church on the continent. We had hoped to conduct the services in quietness after the last demonstration of our deaf member, Mr. Collamore, but we were disappointed. Young Shooks came to church last Sunday with Miss Jones, and his pet terrier dog came with him and settled on the floor of the pew. Shooks at first thought he would send the animal home, but he didn't like to make a fuss in church, so he let it remain. Miss Jones however did not know that the dog was there. When they stood up to sing, the dog leaped on the seat immediately behind Miss Jones, and when she sat down her whole weight came upon the terrier. She gave a loud scream and leaped to her feet while the dog barked, and bit at her, and Shooks in a loud voice ordered him to be quiet. There was instant confusion in the church, and old Mr. Collamore misunderstanding the cause of it, raised a cry of fire and rushed from the building. A panic ensued, and the congregation made for the door. A moment afterward an engine arrived, and in a minute it had a three-inch stream playing through one of the windows on the hindmost of the congregation. By the time there were two inches of water on the floor of the church the matter was explained, and the engine went home. The damages will amount to about four hundred dollars. If Collamore is not suppressed, we shall give up our pew and resign.

STAR-FANCIES.

BY EDITH BOUTILER.

When the moon in pallid splendor
Shines upon a dreaming world,
With a radiance steadfast, tender,
All her bannered light unfurled;
When in silver earth is shrouded,
And the heavens' wide expanse
With a bright-star legion crowded,
What can Nature's charm enhance?

All the earth and sky are swimming
In a sea of crystal light,
Clear and cold and never dimming,
Turning all the slumberous night
To a dream of Eastern splendor,
Till from out the shadows' fold
Troop the fays and peris slender
Of Arabian legends old.

And I see the bottled genii
Rising slowly from the mist,
Houris wrapped in mantles sheeny,
Star crested, moonlight kissed;
While from clouds that hover o'er a
Mystic circle 'neath the skies,
Camaralzaman, Badoura,
Sultans, Viziers, arise.

Graceful forms in veils of tissue
Flit among a turbaned band,
From whose lips the smoke-wreaths issue:
Turks with scimetar in hand
Stalk with haughty mien and gesture
In and out the harem's throng,
While from slave girls rich in vesture
Floats the echo of a song.

But the tired moon is waning,
And of all my stately host
Not an Afrite is remaining,
Not the shadow of a ghost.
But a higher, warmer splendor
Eastward, lightens high and low;
Day is born, with blessings tender,
And I gladly bid them go.

THE GHOST
OF
NORMAN PARK;
on,
Two Women Wronged.

BY MARY ATHERSTONE BIRD.

CHAPTER X.

In the haunted chamber, as I must still call it, Lady Norman was in one of those heavy lethargic slumbers that so frequently came upon her, and in the adjoining room Dr. Waldron was reclining on the sofa, fondling the pet kitten and thinking of her whose partiality for the little animal made it dear to him, when Miss Wentworth entered in unusual excitement, and sat down beside him. He watched the quick heaving of her bosom and the flashing of her eyes, but was at a loss to account for such unusual emotion.

"I sent the letter according to your wish," he said; "has it been delivered?"

"It has," she replied, triumphantly, "and the result is even better than I had hoped for. See there!"

"This is a certificate of the marriage of John Norman and Catherine Wentworth at the parish church of St. Cuthwold, in Cornwall," he said, after reading the paper that she gave him.

"Can you read the name of the place?" she asked. "He threw ink over it, so that I never knew where I was married."

"That ink has faded, leaving the original letters distinctly visible."

"You are quite satisfied that this is a true document?"

"I have not the slightest doubt of it."

"You believe that I was legally married?"

"There is no question of it."

"Then I have my wish. You are convinced, and I care for no one else. She shall not suffer more if I can prevent it."

And she thrust the paper into the hottest chasm of the fire.

"Stay—stay! What are you doing?" cried Dr. Waldron, snatching her hand. He was too late to save the paper, but he kept possession of the hand. She looked at him with a shy, yet confiding smile, and suffered him to draw her into the place beside him. "You have been too hasty," he said.

"No! That was the result of a week's deliberation—of a week's watching and plotting. You will not doubt me again, will you?"

"I never doubted you. Seven years ago it was my own heart that I mistrusted, not you. But in the effort to rid myself of all personal bias, and to avoid even the appearance of seeking to take advantage of your unprotected state—and too much zeal in your cause might easily have been mistaken for it—I fell into the opposite extreme and became ungenerous. You shall never have cause to blame me again."

She seemed in no mood to blame him, and he continued for nearly two hours talking very tenderly, and met with no repulse. He had probably interpreted her smile into a license to speak on the subject nearest his heart; so he tried the experiment, and the result was satisfactory.

After two hours of small talk, which, like the papers in lost pocket-books, was of no value to any one but the owners, they began to converse on a more serious and less pleasurable subject, the probable destiny of Sir John Norman.

"I could never feel easy in my conscience," said Miss Wentworth, "if through my agency any man, however guilty, were to suffer death; nor could you love a woman who would purchase happiness at such a cost."

"Neither would I wish you so to outrage your feelings, dearest. If the law were less vindictive, if he could be imprisoned for life, instead of being made the hero of a public execution, it would be different. As it is, we must wait, which we can afford to do now that we have the assurance of our mutual love to sustain us. Sir John is too intemperate to live long, so you may overcome your scruples and consent to become my wife even during his lifetime; but this I leave entirely to your own sense of what is right. You have had more than your share of sorrow, Heaven knows, and it will be my duty and pleasure to make you happy hereafter. I should begin this after a sorry fashion were I to extort from your pity a concession that would embitter your after-life with regrets. Your wishes, love, and not mine, shall be my law."

In the meanwhile a very different scene was enacting in another part of the house.

Sir John's rage and consternation when he missed the certificate knew no bounds. The brandy that he drank only served to render him more furious. He accused Downey of having purloined it—he turned over every article on the table again and again. He stamped—he swore—he raved.

"My good sir, pray be a little more composed," said the lawyer, "you will do no good by giving way to this violence. Look at the thing rationally. What good could that document do me? What motive could I have for appropriating it?"

"How should I know?" retorted the baronet. "Do you think I can fathom all your accursed schemes?"

"What schemes can I have that are not for your advantage as well as mine? Are not our interests identical? This threat about another inquest may be merely a device of Dr. Waldron's to frighten you. He seems to know or suspect more than is desirable; but as he suffered the first to pass without interference, it is not likely that he will demand another. If he should, a handsome sum might induce him to travel on the continent instead."

"You don't know him. He is as proud as Lucifer, and as incorruptible as Andrew Marvel. And he is wealthy besides. No, no, we must offer him no bribe."

"Then what's to be done?" said the lawyer, biting his dirty nails.

"Drink, you dog, drink!" cried Sir John, tossing off a bumper. "To the devil with all your forebodings! Drink and be jolly! If it comes to the worst I'll swing for it, as many a fine fellow has done before me."

Glass after glass he swallowed with frightful avidity; and at last, forgetting that the corpse of the man he had murdered lay yet unburied beneath his roof, he began singing with drunken vehemence and full dramatic effect—suiting "the action to the word, the word to the action"—a song which at that period was highly popular among a certain class—

> "My name it is Sam Hall,
> Chimney sweep—chimney sweep—
> My name it is Sam Hall,
> I robs both great and small,
> And now I prays for all!
> —— my eyes!"

And so on through all the stages of a condemned criminal's progress from Newgate to Tyburn, in those "good old days" when the poor wretch was actually taken in an open cart, with his coffin for a seat, through some of the most populous parts of London, to be hanged on the north side of Hyde Park, at a place now covered with fashionable squares, and called Tyburnia.

Downey watched the baronet in impotent rage.

"The fool! The brute!" he muttered, "he will betray himself, and I shall lose the money! I wish I could get him to bed."

But this was no easy matter. Sir John, having finished his song, and roared himself hoarse with applauding his own performance, seized upon Downey and dragged him to the dining-room in search of more wine. He had still sufficient sense left to be aware that it would be dangerous to have the servants about him, as he talked very freely when intoxicated, and he therefore wished Downey to go to the butler for a dozen of port.

"Nonsense," said this prudent personage, "you have had quite enough. Go to bed and sleep it off. You can drink again to-morrow. Come, come along!"

"Aha, old boy! I'll be even with you!" cried the baronet, who had been rummaging the sideboard. "Here's a bottle of brandy—that's better than wine. Hurrah!"

"Pray keep up some appearance of decency," remonstrated the lawyer; "what will be thought of you if you sing and shout in this way, when your wife has disappeared no one knows how or where, and a corpse is lying in the house waiting for burial?"

"A corpse!" repeated Sir John, in a horror-stricken whisper, and letting the bottle fall upon the floor as he turned toward his companion with an idiotic stare, "whose corpse is it? Who killed him? You needn't try to make anybody believe that I did it, you know, because nobody would believe you. Why do they bring corpses here? We don't want them. I say, Downey, a capital idea strikes me. We'll give it—I say, Downey, won't we?—We'll give it to Waldron to dissect. Ha! ha! ha! won't that be a capital joke? And so we shall get rid of it quietly. Whose body is it? I won't have it here. Whose is it, I say?"

"Don't you know it is the body of Mr. Smedley, your wife's father?" said the lawyer, hoping to sober him by the thoughts which that name could hardly fail to awaken.

The baronet passed his hand across his brow, staggered and looked utterly bewildered. Then suddenly a new mood came over him. He clung to the attorney, and began to howl and cry like a cowardly schoolboy who dreads a flogging.

"Oh, my dear Downey, you are the only friend I have in the world. What shall I do? Everybody is deserting me. You are the only one who keeps true to me. Tell me what I had better do!"

"Come to bed," said Downey, gladly taking advantage of this pliant mood. "Come to bed. I'll take care of you. Don't be afraid. I'll not let any one else come near you. Come along—come along."

Sir John suffered himself to be led quietly off to his chamber, where Downey himself performed the office of his valet, lest his incautious speech might betray him to his servant. As soon as the heavy sleep of intoxication had fallen upon him, his worthy partner sought his own apartment, for it was now an hour past midnight.

CHAPTER XI.

The baronet slept heartily. His breathing was stertorous, and now and then he clutched at some imaginary thing, and then repelled it with half-uttered maledictions.

The clock had just struck two when the door was softly opened, and a shadowy-looking form clothed in white, approached the bed.

It was Lady Norman. Her long, brown hair hung loose about her shoulders, and half-shrouded her slender form. Her head was crowned with a wreath of weeping willow, mingled with chrysanthemums, autumn roses, and such pale flowers as were still to be found in the garden. Her hair, and the night-dress which formed her only covering, were saturated with water; and the thin fabric, clinging closely round her figure, showed its delicate proportions so exactly that as she stood in the bright moonlight, she might have been taken for some exquisitely sculptured statue.

She sat down upon the bed, and began to weave fantastic little baskets of a bundle of rushes that she carried in her hand; her delirious fancies thus carrying her back to an amusement of her childhood.

Suddenly a new idea struck her. She dropped the rushes and passed her cold, wet hand over the face of the sleeper. Only half awake, yet wildly terrified, he started up, thus bringing himself face to face with the pale, wild countenance that peered at him with large eyes bright with the fire of insanity.

"Why did you kill my father?" she said, in a low whisper, and with a total absence of emotion.

If she had heaped invectives upon him, it would have been easier to bear than the hopeless inanity of her question and tone. He had heard her ask with more animation why he had struck her dog.

He tried to speak, but was helpless as under a nightmare.

"Why did you kill my father?" she repeated, bringing her face yet closer to his.

Sir John fell back in violent convulsions, uttering a yell which aroused the house.

The first person who appeared on the scene was Dr. Waldron. The mortal agony of the unearthly shriek that aroused him from a sweet dream of Catherine Wentworth, had prepared him to find the baronet under an attack of delirium tremens: but he was both shocked and alarmed to see the beautiful cause of the uproar sitting on his bed, placidly weaving her rushes.

Being far more solicitous about Lady Norman than about her wretched husband, he caught her up in his arms, and carried her off, leaving the baronet to the care of whosoever might come next, and by running down the grand staircase, fortunately eluded the observation of those who came crowding down from the upper chambers. One person alone caught a glimpse of him and his burden. Downey was on the qui vive, and peeped through a crevice of his door as he passed.

Dr. Waldron was greatly distressed to find his sweet patient in such a plight, so wet, so cold, so thinly clad—and he feared lest the exposure, in her enfeebled state, might induce a fatal termination of her malady.

He quickly reached the "haunted apartments," and there discovered the cause of the disaster.

Poor Miss Wentworth, worn out by her close attendance on the invalid during so many nights and days, had fallen asleep, and Lady Norman,

> "Led by the insane
> And feeble wanderings of her fading brain,"

had found her way out into the gardens.

He was reluctant to arouse his darling from the sleep she so greatly needed, but the necessity of changing the garment of his lovely burden was imperative, and he called her gently by her name.

"What is amiss?" she said, starting at the first word. "Oh! good Heavens! I have been sleeping! What has happened?"

"Nothing very dreadful, I hope; she has been running about, and has got wet. Will you change her night-dress quickly, and get her to bed again?"

"I have been playing with the swans on the lake," said the sweet maniac, sitting on the rug before the fire, and resuming the manufacture of her rush baskets.

There was something so affecting in her appearance—she looked so beautiful and so innocent, with her childish occupation, her long, fair hair tangled with water weeds, her mild, blue eyes wandering vacantly about, and her little white feet dabbled with mud and cut by the sharp stones—so utterly forlorn, and yet so unconscious of her misery—that Miss Wentworth bowed her head upon her hands and burst into tears.

"Come, dearest, we must get her to bed again," said the doctor, pressing her to his heart, and as she raised her head in reply, a hot drop from his stoical eyes fell upon her cheek. How she loved him for it!

At this moment Mrs. Briggs burst into the room.

"For God's sake, doctor, come to Sir John!" she exclaimed, "he's been taken in some kind of a fit. Do come quick, or I'm sure he'll be dead."

"I know, I know," he replied, coolly, "it's of no great consequence. I'll go presently. We must see to this poor child first. I'm glad you are come to help Miss Wentworth."

"Oh, lack-a-daisy! Where has she been to get in this state?"

"Never mind—out in the garden," he replied, hastily, for he feared that Miss Wentworth would blame herself too severely for the accident.

"Yes," said Lady Norman. "I have been playing with the swans. Let me go to them again. I think I came in to get some bread for them. They know me so well, and are quite tame. We swam around the lake together; I put my arms round the necks of two of them, and away we went together! But it was cold, very cold. But wasn't I clever to swim about like that?"

They all shuddered; and Miss Wentworth exclaimed, in an agony of remorse, "This is all owing to my neglect and carelessness in falling asleep when I ought to have watched her!"

"Do not reproach yourself, there is no blame to be attached to you," said the doctor, so tenderly that, notwithstanding her various anxieties, Mrs. Briggs stared in astonishment. "The dipping may do her no harm after all, and I will take care that she shall have a sound and refreshing sleep now. I wish I had thought of it sooner."

As soon as she was in bed he commenced a series of movements which were totally incomprehensible to the wondering spectators. They consisted chiefly in moving his hands over Lady Norman from her head to her feet; and a singular effect they produced, for though at first she was rebellious, and desirous of jumping up and returning to the garden, she presently lay still, her eyelids quivered, she sighed several times, and at last sunk into a profound slumber.

"She is now in the mesmeric trance," said Dr. Waldron; "do not go near her, and above all be careful not to touch her, however long she may sleep. Probably she will tell me when she will awake. How long shall you remain in the trance?"

"Three days," replied the sleeper, promptly.

"May you be left with safety?"

"Yes. I shall not stir before twelve o'clock on Sunday night."

"Shall you require any food during that time?"

"No, no," she replied, impatiently, "what you eat will nourish me. Now go; they are seeking for you. Sir John Norman is worse. He has delirium tremens. Send for another doctor, or when he dies they will suspect you of killing him."

"When he dies!" repeated the doctor, with more eagerness than decorum; "he will die, then?"

"I cannot talk any more. I am tired."

"'Tis as well," he said, "the future will bring its own revelation. Go on to Sir John, Mrs. Briggs, I will be there as soon as you are. Sleep now in comfort, my darling," he whispered, folding his beloved in a farewell embrace, "the sufferings which that bad man has brought upon himself ought not to trouble you, and this dear little creature is safe for three days. Heaven guard you, my pet!"

"Goodness gracious!" muttered Mrs. Briggs, hastening away from the door where curiosity had detained her for a moment. "Well, if I didn't suspect as much!"

CHAPTER XII.

Dr. Waldron found the baronet, as Lady Norman had said, in a paroxysm of the direful disease that had seized upon him. His staring eyes, with the pupils fixed and contracted, glared upon the terrified servants who crowded round his bed; and they shrunk back in horror when, with his cold and tremulous hands, he endeavored to cast among them the fearful spectres that pressed upon him.

"Oh, you are come at last, are you?" he exclaimed as Dr. Waldron approached, "you are in league with them all, and can take them away. For God's love! don't let them strangle me! And take her away; she's the worst of all. Look! There she sits on my bed with her hands full of reeds and wild flowers, and all covered with mud and green slime from the bottom of the river!"

The servants looked where he pointed, and there, sure enough, was ample corroboration of his awful ravings. The bed was wet, and scraps of leaves, moss and water plants and streaks of mud were visible upon it, and on the floor.

This proof of a ghostly visitation was too palpable to be doubted. The butler silently drew Dr. Waldron's attention to the spot.

"Nonsense," said the latter, "do you suppose a ghost could carry such things about? There's some natural explanation of this, you may be sure, but it is of more importance, just now, to attend to Sir John. Send at once for his family surgeon. I have left the profession and do not wish to interfere. Where does Mr. Rycroft live?"

"Only a little way beyond the park gates, sir," replied Simpson, "I'll send for him immediately. Come along, James," he whispered to one of the footman, "it may be as Dr. Waldron says, but somehow I don't quite like going about this house alone to-night."

They went together and dispatched a groom on horseback for the village doctor, and then Simpson stood for a short time, cogitating beside the embers of the kitchen fire.

"James," he said, at last, "will you take a drop of something?"

"I don't care if I do," was the reply.

"James, have you got a screw-driver handy?" again asked the butler, when the glasses were emptied.

"Yes—there's several in the tool chest."

"Then I'll tell you what, James, I should very much like to take off the lid of the coffin, and just have a look at those wounds on the poor old gentleman's head. My mind misgives me. Did you hear what Sir John kept on saying in his ramblings?"

"That I did; and what he said about the whip made me think of something that happened the same day that Mr. Smedley was killed."

"Ay, indeed? What was that?"

"Why, Sir John's hat stood on the table in the hall, and Dr. Waldron asked me whose it was. And I looked close and saw it was Sir John's, and I was surprised to see it there, because you know we used always to notice that he'd always hang it up, drunk or sober. And there was a little light riding-whip lying across it, not the heavy-handled one he always carried, and which I have not seen since that day. Now, putting this and that together, it makes one feel queer, don't it?"

"If it don't, it had ought," responded the butler, solemnly.

"Take another glass, James, and then we'll go and unscrew the coffin. It can't hurt nobody, and I should like to see."

They ascended with stealthy steps to the chamber of death. As they passed by their master's door they paused a moment to listen to his ravings.

"What scream was that?" he cried. "There was nobody there! If she saw it, it must have been her ghost! How would a ghost look in a court of justice? It is no use to threaten me! I won't stand it, I say; I can prove the marriage, and a wife can't give evidence against her husband. Ah! Downey! you villain! Why do you bring that whip here? I haven't seen it for months. How should I know how that blood came to be on the handle? Ask the servants. Some of them must have seen my hat and whip on the hall table. I'll swear I put them there. No one could kill a man with such a switch as that!"

The two listeners exchanged significant glances and went on. The coffin was quickly opened, and the wound examined.

"There's the print of that whip handle as if it had been taken in wax," said the butler, in an awe-struck whisper; "can there be a doubt about the matter now?"

"Not a shadder," replied James, "no more than that old Downey's at the bottom of the mischief."

An ugly, hooked nose, with the concomitants of a retreating forehead and a hideous mouth, appeared for an instant at the door and disappeared.

Twenty minutes later, as Mr. Rycroft galloped through the park, he remarked to the groom who had fetched him, that he feared Sir John must be worse, as a horseman was coming—probably another messenger to hasten him. But they lost sight of him as he entered the shadow of a group of trees, and when they reached the spot he was nowhere to be seen.

"Perhaps he saw us coming and turned back," said Mr. Rycroft.

"Then we should have seen him," returned the groom, riding closer to his companion, "I don't much like it, sir. Such strange things have been seen about lately. Depend upon it, it bodes no good to Sir John."

The man was right. The movements of the being they had seen seldom boded good to any one. As he put up the horses he saw that Downey's nag was gone.

"It was him then," muttered the groom. "Now I wonder why he should go for to hide hisself?"

The crafty lawyer had good reasons for hiding himself, and from that hour he was never again seen in the neighborhood.

As soon as Mr. Rycroft appeared, Dr. Waldron withdrew from the baronet's chamber, positively declining any interference in the case.

"If he does not die of this," he observed to Mrs. Briggs, as he passed through her parlor on his way to Miss Wentworth's apartments, where his visits were as constant as though Lady Norman required unremitting attention, "if he does not die of this, he has betrayed so much that he will certainly be hanged for the murder, and I want to keep out of the whole affair, if possible."

"Old Downey has gone off, sir, without a word to any one."

"A good riddance, too," replied Dr. Waldron; "the rats always forsake a falling house or a sinking vessel. Is Miss Wentworth in her room? I am going to see my patient," he added, with professional gravity.

CHAPTER XIII.

For three days Sir John Norman remained in a dangerous state.

Dr. Waldron still continuing firm in his refusal to have anything to do with the case, Mr. Rycroft summoned another surgeon of high repute in the neighborhood, and the two subsequently called in the aid of an eminent London physician. All in vain. The room was still filled with gibbering spectres. Still the Ophelia-like figure of his innocent wife sat upon his bed, weaving her dank rushes into fantastic wreaths. Still the shadows of those whom he had wronged—and they were many—pressed round him, hissing out reproaches and warnings of coming retribution. Tenants whom he had driven from their farms, peasants whom he had prosecuted for the law-made crime of poaching, and whose wives and children he had reduced to starvation; parents whom he had robbed of their daughters, hapless girls whom he had seduced from their homes and then cast out upon the cruel world; friends whom he had ruined at the gaming-table, and women whose fair name he had maliciously whispered away,—these were the untiring attendants around the sleepless couch of the guilty man.

But worst of all was one motionless phantom that had taken its place at the foot of the bed, and never left its post. Its stony eyes were fixed, without once closing or turning aside, upon those of the baronet, and not all the blood that flowed from its head seemed able to blind them. Thus it had first appeared, and thus, unlike the rest that were forever changing, it continued to watch, and the miserable wretch well knew that what it watched for was his own death. In vain he strove to hide himself from the dreadful presence; those terrible dead eyes possessed an awful power, and compelled him to look at them.

No opiates could soothe—no assurances could calm him.

His whole aspect expressed the wildest terror, and excited repugnance in all who saw him. He had been cupped on the back of his neck, and the blood that was spattered about his pillow imparted a yet more ghastly appearance to his haggard face. At times he sunk into a brief, uneasy slumber, when his low mutterings were scarcely audible, and then again he burst into the wildest yells of frenzy.

No tender, womanly care ministered to him, for his servants kept aloof in horror, and two callous old hired nurses had charge of him.

"This cannot last long," said the physician; "he is rapidly approaching the last stage, and all the symptoms are unfavorable. He is in a shocking state of mind; murder, forgery, and every crime which man's depravity can commit, seem to burthen his conscience. We have done all that art can do to save his life, and we should be thankful that we have failed to restore a wretch whose recovery could only have led to an ignominious death upon the gallows. I can do nothing more, and must return at once to town. But I would advise you to send for a clergyman if he shows any signs of returning reason."

The clergyman was accordingly sent for, but his presence only exasperated the dying man, who received him with imprecations and abuse. The minister retired, and Sir John sunk into a deep lethargy, from which it was doubtful whether he would awake, or if he did, it would be only in the final convulsion.

Midnight came solemnly to the silent chamber in which the beautiful young wife, so soon to be a widow, lay as still as a figure on a tomb. The moment approached when she had predicted she would awake from the trance, and Dr. Waldron and Miss Wentworth stood beside her, anxiously watching for the accomplishment of the prophecy.

The intervening three days had been spent by the latter in such complete rest of body and happiness of soul, that her cheek had recovered its bloom, and her soft, gray eyes more than all their former lustre. Dr. Waldron carefully kept from her knowledge the horrors attending Sir John's illness. She knew only that he was gradually sinking, and neither felt nor feigned regret at that which his best friend—had he possessed one—could not wish to obviate.

As for Lady Norman, the doctor had now little doubt that her bodily health would be re-established; the only [illegible] concerning her mind.

The two lovers, therefore, watched anxiously for the opening of her sweet blue eyes, which would tell whether reason had returned.

The clock had just struck twelve when Lady Norman heaved a deep sigh. Her first words fell upon the ears of the listeners like the accents of another world.

"He is gone," she said, slowly and distinctly; "he died in that last struggle. And now Julia begins a new life. She is a child, and knows nothing of the past. Her own father is happy. Be ye her parents upon earth, in her new infancy. Take her from this house to-night. Tell Mrs. Briggs to follow in the morning, or she will be in danger from the fire. Take her and her husband into your service. Give Julia your name, for she is your daughter. Never tell her of the past. She is blessed in forgetting it."

They looked at each other in amazement, which was much increased when the gentle girl opened her eyes, and after gazing around in an unspeculative manner, smiled like a baby at Miss Wentworth. It was not the look of an idiot, but that of an infant that recognizes its mother.

"Is not this strange?" whispered Miss Wentworth; "do you think she will ever wholly recover her senses?"

"I trust she will," he replied; "I have read of somewhat similar cases, in which the mind gradually resumed its tone. You must humor her, and treat her as a child. I will send Mrs. Briggs with some food for her—and then you had better prepare for your journey."

"Journey!" exclaimed Miss Wentworth, incredulously, "you do not mean to obey her instructions, surely?"

"At the risk of being called superstitious by the lady whose good opinion I value more than anything else in the world, I do mean to carry out her instructions literally. I know enough of these strange psychological phenomena to be aware that there is an immense deal more that I do not know; and if for no other reason, I would take her away, lest opposition to her wishes should have an injurious effect upon her mind. Therefore, my love, prepare for this dreadful journey which is to take you from your tomb into the living world again. And if," he added, his eyes twinkling with mischief, "when there, you wish to wear widow's weeds for a year, why—I'll not permit it."

As he returned through Mrs. Briggs's room he encountered that good lady herself, who had just entered by the opposite door.

"Oh! doctor!" she began, "the Lord be thanked! He's gone at last!"

"Gone? Dead?" he repeated. "When was this?"

"Just as the clock struck twelve. He woke up out of his sleep about ten minutes before, and went off in the most awful convulsions. I'm sure it's a mercy he is gone. And here's his second-cousin, Captain Norman, Sir Charles he is now, though—he's just arrived. And he insists that all Sir John said, was only rambling. And so I hope folks will let it be called, for the honor of the family. But Simpson and James, they both took a look at the body the night before it was buried, and they had something to say to Captain Norman; but now they hold their tongues about what they saw. And Simpson told my husband they had each got two hundred pounds to take them to America or Australia."

"Ay, indeed!" said Dr. Waldron, "is he that kind of man—bribing, and so forth? Then I will have nothing whatever to do with him. But I must have Gray Meg at any cost. I will commission your husband to purchase her as if for himself. The two ladies will leave to-night, under my escort; and I trust you will follow us to-morrow. This was Lady Norman's especial injunction; and when I tell you that she informed us of the exact moment of Sir John's death, and even the manner of it, I think you will agree with me that we had better follow her advice. She hinted at some danger, from fire. Now, Mrs. Briggs, will you come with us and be our housekeeper? We shall not have so large an establishment as this, but I hope it will be a more regular and comfortable one. There is little time for making minute arrangements—so say at once if you will come."

"And Briggs?" suggested the good woman.

"Will of course be our coachman, farm bailiff, or anything else he likes."

"Then we'll come with you, sir, and gladly."

"Without consulting your husband?"

"John Briggs will do what I ask him," she replied confidently, "and it's a pity to wake him up for nothing."

"Then you will come on to London to-morrow, and bring Meg and all the cats, at least all those that Miss Wentworth is fond of."

"Lord, sir, she'll have something else to think of soon besides cats."

"I hope so; but if there's any danger of fire, we will have puss and her kittens in safety, if you please. Now take Lady Norman something to eat, while I see about the carriage."

Before morning Dr. Waldron left a ceremonious message for the new baronet, and quitted the hall. When his carriage had proceeded a short distance down the avenue it was stopped by old Briggs, and two women, closely veiled and warmly cloaked, were smuggled in.

"Drive on fast!" cried the exultant doctor, and on they dashed.

The next morning Briggs effected the purchase of Gray Meg for a moderate price. The bargain was made with the steward, and the mare was immediately removed to the stable of the village inn. Briggs had shrewd doubts as to whether Sir Charles Norman would ever "see the color of the money" that he paid for her. But his conscience did not trouble him on that score, for Meg was really Miss Wentworth's property, and Giles had as good a right as any one else to the money paid for removing her.

In accordance with Dr. Waldron's instructions the worthy couple followed him to London during the course of the day, and were comfortably established at the hotel to which the doctor had taken his two fair friends.

Miss Wentworth had promised that the wedding should take place quietly in London, and that they should then go to Dr. Waldron's house in Devonshire.

The morning after their arrival in town, as the doctor was reading the Times, he uttered a loud exclamation.

"This is strange!" he said, "the hall at Norman Park is burnt down. Those old nurses who attended Sir John got tipsy and set the bed on fire. They were rescued, and every one else escaped, for it fortunately occurred early in the evening, and the new baronet is spared the expense of burying his relative. So ends this strange, eventful history. Our interest in Norman Park is ended with the fulfilment of poor Julia's prediction. Let us try to forget it, dearest, and along with it let us forget Downey, and all else that is odious and disagreeable; and above all, my love, [illegible]."

As she only replied with a blush and a smile, he considered himself fully authorized to give the clergyman notice to be ready the next morning.

Julia's affairs were left in the hands of her father's solicitor, who managed, without creating the least scandal or arousing public attention to this romance in real life, to prove Sir John's first marriage, and by thus annulling her own, to rescue her property from the grasp of Sir Charles Norman, who seemed to be as rapacious as his predecessor.

Without waiting for all this to be settled, Dr. Waldron took his wife and adopted daughter to his fine old house in one of the sunniest vales of lovely Devon. He took to farming soon after he settled there, for the sake of employing the poor laborers in his neighborhood; but soon he became interested in the pursuit for its own sake, and his model farm employed so many hands that want and misery were banished from his vicinity. His wife meanwhile aided the good work by establishing a school, and teaching the cottagers' wives how to manage their little households.

Julia rapidly acquired or recovered her native tongue, and learned to read, write, &c., just as a child would do. She afterward devoted herself to music, but showed no liking for or remembrance of any of the other accomplishments she had possessed in her former existence. She was a most affectionate daughter to Dr. and Mrs. Waldron, and an equally fond sister to their children. On one point alone did she manifest a faint remembrance of her past sufferings. If a hint were dropped concerning the possibility of her being married, she was seized with a violent fit of trembling, and a sadness which did not pass away for several days. They therefore carefully shielded her from any allusion to the subject, and she lived with them in what, to her, was really single blessedness.

THE END.

The Fighting Ants.

A writer in the *Revue des Deux Mondes* says the 17th of June, 1805, is a memorable date for biology, since on that day Peter Huber discovered, in the environs of Geneva, the wonderful instinct of fighting bestowed on certain species of ants. He saw a regiment of great red ants march in a column eight or ten feet long, and three or four inches broad, across a road, a hedge and part of a meadow, to attack an ant-hill of another species situated in the high grass. The date mentioned was the thirtieth anniversary of the Battle of Bunker Hill—a coincidence which doubtless did not occur to Huber, and which may serve only to suggest to the fancy of a cynic that a superior being looking down upon Boston, June 17, 1775, might likewise have seen a column of red-coated insects marching to attack a hill held by ants in homespun.

Here, however, the analogy ceases; for, in the case of Huber's observation, the red-coats, after a spirited struggle, completely defeated the grays. But it was not the fact of a fight which surprised the distinguished naturalist. He had seen battles and exterminations before among such insects. The novelty on this occasion was the discovery that the purpose was robbery, not murder. The victors plundered the captured city of a large number of larvæ and nymphæ, which they carried back in their mandibles to be nursed by the workers or auxiliaries who dwelt with these professional warriors, and performed for them all the labors of marketing and housekeeping. The amazons, as the fighters are called, do not even know how to get their own food. A number of them died in a drawer within reach of honey.

DESPAIR NOT!

Day follows night—night follows day,
The earth rolls around and speeds on its way.
Light follows darkness—darkness the light,
"The mists will arise from the dreariest blight;"
Oh, man—why despair?

Some by mere fortune are favored—some blest
With rare consummations and high—that attest
To a marvellous thought, a vigilant mind
That no band of theirs has labored to find;
But man—why despair?

Work has accomplished the majesty there,
Work with the spirit's arm, wearied and bare,
Work will have power forever and aye
To climb to life's summit, though dark be the way;
Despair not—but pray! M. J. B.

A WOMAN'S VOW.

[BY MARY E. WOODSON.

CHAPTER XLVII.

CARROLL TRESSYLIAN'S STORY.

Assistance was speedily summoned, and when Earle Templeton awoke from that long, death-like swoon, the sun had risen in the east—but for him, it seemed as though night had settled upon the earth forever. Carroll Tressylian forgot his own griefs when he beheld the stony, listless agony of the other's face.

"Earle," said Mr. Tressylian, "our lives seem all to have been a wretched game of cross-purposes; but you must rise superior to them, as each of us has heretofore done. Think of the situation. You will have to nerve yourself to meet her as a sister."

"I know," he answered, in a hollow tone. "Our efforts must be to spare her. I have not the strength to see her now. You must break it to her, father. I must leave England as speedily as possible. I shall come back to you after a time, calm, I dare say; but I must struggle with this alone. Tell her that I have gone in search of the villains who so wronged you—but do not let her know how I suffer."

"I have reason to think the doubly-damned villain, the author of all our wretchedness, is now in England," said Mr. Tressylian, with set teeth and clenched fist; "and his name is, or was in the old days at Coldham, Lewis Hartman."

Despite the misery which he had thought nothing could enhance, something that seemed more like a sense of guilt than anything he had ever known, smote Earle Templeton to the quick.

"Lewis Hartman," he cried, "that dark, mysterious fellow with the hangdog look, who appeared as a witness, and after prowling about N—— for some months, at last disappeared. And the supposed criminal, Ralph Thornton, escaped hanging only by suicide."

"Poor Ralph," said Mr. Tressylian, brushing a tear from his eye. "Of all the events of that terrible time, nor e has given me, so help me Heaven, a bitterer grief than this. A nobler, honester lad never lived, Earle; and it must well nigh have killed him to think that he was suspected of the crime, though innocent; for he loved me with unusual fidelity and devotion. He had a sister, I think; and, yes, a widow, if she survived the disgrace and horror, for he was married, I recollect, about the time that I was. I must find them, if they still live, Earle, and make what poor compensation I can; for they must be very poor."

For the first time since the tragic incidents of those days, an imperfect remembrance of [illegible] ton's recollection; and the crowded scenes of that court-room, with the pale, sad-eyed young prisoner at the bar rose up to mock him.

He had thought, in the unnatural pride of his eloquence, and the then new-born misanthropy of his soul, to avenge a crime which had not been committed; and he had brought the innocent to death, or to living shame and disgrace. In all the years he had boasted of this—that he had done his whole duty; while his self-righteousness had been worse than filthy rags, for it had led him to crime.

"But what motive could Lewis Hartman have had," asked Templeton, like one in a stupor. "He did not have you murdered; and, if I mistake not, he was the first to discover the money, identified as that you had had upon your person, at the time of your mysterious disappearance."

"That was but a part of the cunning of the deep scoundrel and hypocrite," said Mr. Tressylian, with stern anger. "He cared not for a few paltry hundred pounds, when twenty millions of dollars was at stake! Though no drop of kindred blood flows in his veins and mine, thank God, he was one of the next nearest heirs by a collateral consanguinity to four grand merchant princes, who were suddenly swept away by a pestilence in Australia—when I should be reported dead. The wills provided, that if I should have ceased to live at the time when the property of the testators was to pass into other hands, and should leave no male heir, then their immense wealth should go to Lewis Hartman and his kindred. Is not the motive sufficiently apparent now?"

"Yes; but is it not strange that a villain of that desperate type should not have secured himself fully by killing or having you killed in reality?"

"Small thanks to him that I was not," continued Mr. Tressylian, in that deep tone of anger which he found it impossible to repress when speaking of those incidents. "He fancies me buried a thousand fathoms in the sea, or he would never have dared show his face in England, or within the borders of civilization again. And hence my great anxiety, nay, my determination, to preserve my incognito until I can bring him to justice."

"Have you reasons for supposing him in England?" asked Templeton, with a dark scowl upon his face. "He has not been heard of here for years—not since the death of—of Thornton, I think."

"I have heard of him in London, flourishing under another name," replied Mr. Tressylian; "and Heaven would never have suffered me to return had it not decreed that I should overtake him."

"But why did you hide yourself for all these years?" asked Templeton, wearily.

"Because I was a slave, and in chains!"

"My God, a slave! What can you mean?"

"Ah," said Mr. Tressylian, drawing a heavy breath. "It is a tale of direful, monstrous cruelty, and well may it harrow my soul to relate it. Some of the incidents, too, are so strange, that they must sound like the veriest fictions of romance. It has seemed to me to-day that it must be a horrible nightmare, from which I am but now beginning to awake, except that, like Rip Van Winkle, I see about me the torturing evidences of an unnatural sleep of years. Yet I recall as vividly as though it were this evening that fatal night, when I went to and was returning from the house of old Carstairs. I had reached the furze-brake in the darkness, down by the river, when a horseman halted me and demanded if my name were Carroll Tressylian. I had no sooner responded in the affirmative, than he dashed at me with a drawn sword and ran it into my side. I cried out, and tried to defend myself as best I could, but the wind howled as though it were a conspiring demon, and I had no hope of being heard. At the same moment a man came up behind me, inflicting another wound in my thigh, and grasping me by the collar of my doublet, drew me into the hedge. There yet another man came up and took the money from my pockets. I heard them consulting together, and it was agreed to leave it hid, that the impression might be, in case of its being found, that I had been murdered and my body thrown into the river. Then they mounted me behind one of them, drew my arms about his waist, and fastened my wrists together with something that had a spring lock to it, as I knew by the click it gave when they put it on. Then they drew a cloak about me and rode away. After several hours they came to a stone pit, near a broken wall, and as there was here a rick of hay, they got down to feed their horses. They talked awhile together, and then tumbled me into the pit. I had lain in it for perhaps an hour, when they came out and dragged me up again. I told them they had already robbed me, and I thought they might now leave me to die in peace. But they only cursed me, and drew me on the horse again.

"Just before daylight—as I judged it to be—they reached a lone house upon a heath, where they took me down, almost dead. When the woman of the house saw that I could neither speak nor stand, she seemed touched with compassion, and asked them why they were riding about with a dead man. They answered that it was a friend who was hurt, and that they were taking him within reach of a skilful surgeon. She responded that if they did not make haste it would be of no avail, for their friend would be dead. They then carried me to a bed, and would allow no one to come near me but a little girl. We stayed there all night, and they gave me some broth and other stimulants. In the morning they mounted me as before, and rode all day, but when night came they stopped again at some house, and I slept on a pile of cushions between their beds. I think it was the next day we reached a seaport town, and just beyond it they dismounted, and laying me on the ground, one of them stood over me, while the others turned to converse with a man who had come up. I heard them disputing about money, and then some question was asked about me; at this the fellow at my side turned with an oath, and said it was much easier to get out of a country like this with a sick friend who could tell no tales, than to have the dead body of an enemy to dispose of, and that he wished me taken out to sea as speedily as possible, as he was afraid I was going to die. They then took me in a boat, and carried me on board a vessel lying near. My wounds were dressed, and when I had begun to feel like a live man once more, we were out on the broad ocean., and had been for several weeks.

"One day I ventured to ask them what they intended doing with me, and one of the men cursed me and told me I would know soon enough. I think my sufferings had touched even their hearts with pity and that they had delayed to make way with me at first, through fear of some of the crew who were discharged at the first port we touched, and then in the expectation that I would die of the wounds already received. At last, however, two of the men came into the dark hole in which I had been locked up, and taking me to the end of a [illegible] into the sea. I suppose they had thought me too weak to make any exertion to save myself, and to this day I cannot tell how I did it; for I had no desire, as I had certainly not the faintest hope of being saved; but I had learned to swim in my early youth, and I had managed to keep above water for half an hour when something struck against me. It chanced to be a plank, sent drifting to that spot in the mercy of God. I drifted on that all night, and in the morning I was picked up by a Turkish vessel. We sailed again for several days, and then I was put ashore with several other unfortunate creatures, and carried under an escort to a place where I was kept locked up until one day a man came in and took me out. I was made to understand that he had bought me, and that henceforth I must serve him to the best of my ability. My master was a physician who lived near Smyrna, and when I had learned to speak the language, he set me to work at a still-house. I suppose I must have pleased him, for he kept me at my post for ten long years, and at last appointed me a sort of under-manager, and gave me a silver bowl to drink out of, as an especial mark of his favor.

"My life for the next few years was something easier. But one day he took me out to view a field of cotton, and asked me to show him how I would gather it. I did not please him I suppose, and he struck me a violent blow, and drew a stiletto to stab me. I determined to hazard the worst fate that could befall me then, and wrenching the weapon out of his hands, I plunged it into his own bosom, and he fell dead at my feet. I hid the body in a heap of straw hard by, and mounting his horse fled to the woods. At length after many perilous adventures and fearful hardships I reached Constantinople. I had disposed of the horse long since, for fear he might aid in my being identified. Here I sold my silver bowl, and made my way across into Europe.*

"I will not weary you with a detail of my wanderings through Austria, Hungary and Germany, and how often I told my strange story to men who shook their heads or laughed at me in utter incredulity. The former only believed me insane, while the latter declared me a lying adventurer. I knew then that I should be spared to reach home once more, and be avenged on my enemies. So bent on this am I, that when I found my poor wife dead, I thought, Earle, I would not even make myself known to you until they had been punished; but the sight of your strong true face melted me, and caused my heart to go out to you for one single word of affection, the first that had gladdened my soul in eighteen years. And God knows my coming was not too soon."

"No," said Earle Templeton, with another convulsive shudder. "Would to Heaven it had been but one year ago! Oh, my God! I cannot think of it. I cannot realize that you are my father. In my boyhood, when I questioned you with regard to my parents, you always silenced me so coldly that I could never have guessed the truth. You thought to spare me pain, perhaps, but how much better it would have been for me to know all."

"Yes," replied Mr. Tressylian, sadly, "far, far better. But I could not then see the results here brought about by what seemed to me the wisest course."

*Should the reader consider the supposed murder and subsequent adventures of Carroll Tressylian, with the evidence against Ralph Thornton, unnatural, as they may well do, the author has deemed it best to state that these very circumstances upon which her romance has been founded are taken almost verbatim from a brief record of criminal jurisprudence in England rather more than two hundred years ago.

"To-morrow, then," said Templeton in a hollow tone, "we will go to London, as you have delayed seeing your daughter until you can safely proclaim yourself in the eyes of the world. And if Lewis Hartman be above ground we will find him. I must, however, ask you one question to-night. I suppose I ought to know that it is a useless one, and yet I cannot be content with supposition. Do I bear my mother's name because she had no legal claim to yours?"

"Good heavens!" cried Mr. Tressylian, quite startled, "my dear boy, no. Your mother was as lawfully my wife as was ever the mother of the darling child I have never seen; but there were reasons—it is a long and painful story, and I will tell it to you when we are both better able to bear it—why it was best that you should not be known to the world as my son. In the meantime we must rest an hour or so, and I will ask you to show me where I can sleep, for I am exhausted in mind and body."

CHAPTER XLVIII.

HUNTED DOWN.

Dr. George Chester, the famous London physician, sat in his open carriage as it drove through one of the retired streets of the city, with the last report of the Public Board in his hand. His time was so constantly employed that he had to avail himself of every moment, even as he drove along the streets, to keep himself at all posted, and hence it was no unusual spectacle to behold him in the midst of turmoil and bustle on every hand, so deeply absorbed in the pages of some pamphlet or journal as to be utterly oblivious of his surroundings. Indeed the unusual feature of to-day's drive was, that with the book before him, he had ceased to read, and commanding his driver to curb in the horses to their slowest pace, he had half screened himself behind one of the curtains of his carriage, and sat narrowly watching a pedestrian who sauntered leisurely down the sidewalk to his left.

As far as could be judged, the man who had attracted his attention seemed about his own age, of a much sparer, more diminutive figure, and far less prepossessing appearance; though very young ladies—struck with his dark curling hair, his eyes and mustache, his exquisite dress, and showy diamonds were constantly exclaiming "how handsome!" And from the manner in which he swung himself along the streets, one would be apt to fancy that the individual in question would be the first to endorse the most favorable of these comments.

Entirely unconscious of the attention which he had so suddenly and earnestly attracted from one of his own sex, and whose regards were evidently neither of love nor admiration, the gentleman continued his walk, twirling a gold-headed cane as he went, for some half-dozen squares, without ever glancing back, and consequently entirely unconscious of the eager eyes that were watching him so narrowly.

Pausing at last before one of the public hospitals of the city, the stranger looked up, hesitated a moment, and then passed in through the great pillars of the balcony.

"By St. George!" muttered the doctor, "my own hospital. What can he want there? It must be he. No other man, as Tennyson says in Enoch Arden, ever bore 'rascal in the motions of his back' like that. If I am not mistaken I shall give him such a thrashing before he escapes me to-day as shall cause him to stand in need of a hospital in good earnest. And the [illegible] to be able to swagger through life at that gait."

The driver marvelled at the unusual alacrity with which his master sprang from the carriage and hastened in through the main entrance of the building.

The ward-master looked up curiously as the quickened step of the surgeon in charge fell on his ear.

"Good-morning, doctor."

"Good-morning, warden, who was the dark, foppish fellow going in here a few moments before me?"

"Can't find out his name, sir. Has been here twice before."

"Where does he go?"

"Ward No. 20. Some poor relation there. Asked to see Mrs. South when he first came."

"The devil!" muttered the doctor between his set teeth. "The old beldam who is constantly calling on Carroll Tressylian and Earle Templeton in her delirium. I'll wager my right hand it is he. And if so, and the memories of those old times can be laid aside with the assurance that she is at rest, then peace and dear Lucile may smile upon me at last. I'll remain here with your permission, warden, until the stranger comes out," he said, aloud.

The sub-official politely whirled a chair from his desk and handed the physician a morning paper.

Dr. Chester pulled his hat over his brow, asked if any of the patients had died, and turned his attention to the journal. The ward-master had resumed his pen, and the silence unbroken, except by the roar without, had continued for ten minutes perhaps, when the latter whirled round, as though the building were falling in to see Dr. Chester, usually so grave and deliberate, spring from his seat with the bound of a tiger, dash madly through the door, and clutching the individual whom they had so briefly discussed but a few moments before by the collar of his exquisite black coat, begin such a vigorous shaking as threatened to bring the eyes of the latter from his head.

"Liar! Scoundrel! Thief! I have waited for you nearly twenty years!"

"Who—who are you?" gasped the man, in bewildered astonishment.

"You may pretend to forget, but I do not. Never for one moment in all these years has George Chester abandoned the idea of ultimately overtaking Lewis Hartman."

Having exhausted himself for the instant, George Chester stood still, his iron grip unrelaxed, however, upon the other's coat. His adversary, as might have been expected, had changed color several times. He now ventured to look up with a poor assumption of haughtiness.

"You are insane! My name is Chelsea."

"No doubt. Tricksters of your stamp have any number of aliases. It is for the role of Lewis Hartman that I mean to hold you to account. No lie can save you now."

"I have no intention of attempting one," answered our old acquaintance, seeing that it was in vain for him to expect to escape recognition. "My name was once Lewis Hartman, but it was changed by legislative enactment, at the request of a relative from whom I inherited a fortune, and hence at this time I am Lewis Chelsea."

"Your name and your fortune are alike indifferent to me, sir," thundered the doctor, while the warden still gaped in amazement. "Where is the poor, deluded girl you stole from my house? Answer me truthfully, sir, or you never go from this house alive, for I have the strength of ten men in dealing with you, as you see. Where is she?"

"Am I still responsible to the old lover for my wife?" he could not help asking with the old Hartman sneer upon his face.

In an instant the cane was wrenched from his hand, and was descending in a shower of lightning blows upon his back until he cried out lustily for mercy.

"Back, Thorpe, I command you," said the doctor, imperiously to the warden who was offering some mild protestation. "This is a debt of old standing, and shall be paid. Now, sir," again turning to Hartman, "I think you are persuaded that you had best answer my questions. I have often heard of Mr. Chelsea and his immense wealth; but unfortunately I had no idea it could be you. And you see it will be a much easier matter for me to hunt you up again if you lie to me, as it is the nature of your craven tongue to do. Where is Lilian Thornton?"

"For all I know you may be better posted than I am," he began, but the threatening cane made him wince and hurry on. "She is in London, I swear, living, as you may readily ascertain, in retired splendor on Piccadilly street. As it turned out, I regret very much that she did not remain with you as Miss Thornton, or anything else. As Mrs. Hartman she destroyed one's appreciation of her superior beauty by some startlingly repulsive peculiarities of tem—"

"One other word against her at your peril," cried George Chester. "Poor, broken-hearted child. You enticed her from all that she held dear when her mind was shattered by a terrible blow, and what could you expect? It were a God's pity, save on her own account, that she did not murder you in the hour of her abduction."

"If it will appease you to know," continued Hartman, writhing with shame and pain and indignation—for while physically the inferior of the other, he was not always a coward—and yet unable to suppress his old inclination to ridicule every subject—"No 'Bride of Lammermoor' ever felt a stronger inclination to do so; but she had need of me, and, d—— it, sir, she had the cunning to use me, and when she thought my assistance of no farther avail, to throw me off without compassion. But I may match my proud lady yet."

"Your match is to be found only in Newgate," said the doctor. "She was then, thank Heaven, sharp enough to dupe you. But has she ever suffered for the comforts of life?"

"Never, I swear it. Her yearly income is so superabundant, that she expends it in a thousand fancied charities."

"I see from the concentrated bitterness of your tone," answered the doctor, in suppressed wrath, "that you have told the truth for once, or I should not leave life in you. And in one way, at least, your crime has met its punishment. Now, sir, for having palmed a lie on me years ago, I will give you mine; and if ever you cross my path again, it will take the form of a bullet;" and the cane once more began a rain of blows that caused the unhappy recipient to shrink, until half a dozen men rushed in, and tore him with some difficulty from George Chester's hands.

"You can now show him into the street, gentlemen, for having trespassed on my property when forbidden," said the doctor, throwing the cane from his hands, "and bid him remember in departing that, on all occasions, it may be best for him to speak the truth, when dealing with a gentleman."

And, without pausing to render further explanation, Dr. Chester passed down the corridor of the stately building, which his own munificence had donated to the suffering poor, and left his old rival to be thrust into the streets, with fearful threats of vengeance upon his lips.

The doctor was engaged perhaps for an hour, going the rounds with his regular system; and when he returned, his composure was as completely restored as though the exciting adventure just narrated had been a dream of the warden's brain.

"Thorpe," he said to the latter, in passing out, "No. 20 is much worse. See that she is reasonably stimulated to-day. Keep life in her as long as possible, and you shall be well rewarded."

And the surgeon's back was scarcely turned, when Thorpe, with the stimulants which he had received, set about the performance of his duty.

(To be continued in our next. Commenced in No. 18.)

THE ROMANCE OF A TIN BOX.

BY LOUIS A. ROBERTS.

I have an indistinct recollection of having read an English story somewhere concerning the adventures of a tin box, but this is a very different box. That, if I mistake not, was a dispatch-box, on the way from Downing street to an ambassador on the continent, or on the way from the ambassador to Downing street, perhaps; I cannot say which. But no matter; I only want it understood at the start that this is not the same old box.

This affair occurred in 1865, some time in September. We fellows in the "Pay Office" had growled all summer because we could get no vacation. The war was just over, you remember, and we were doing an uncommonly lively business in settling up with the paymasters of volunteers, who were being mustered out every day. Not a man of the regular force could be spared, and not only that, but twenty or thirty extra clerks were put on temporarily.

But by September the worst of the rush was over, and two or three of the boys, who had got in their applications first, were granted a month's vacation. Among these was Frank Wills, who lived up at Cumberland, and who had been in a stew for the last three months to get off; and no wonder. He had confided in the strictest confidence to nearly every man in the office the secret that he was going up home to marry "just the gayest little girl you ever saw."

There was a detachment of regulars up at Cumberland and Piedmont that summer, as it happened, guarding a lot of government stores in those towns, and through somebody's negligence they had been overlooked and had received no pay for six months. At the end of that time the lieutenant in command took the liberty to send in a respectful reminder to the Department, and the paymaster-general, with characteristic promptness, immediately gave the rolls over to Major Bramley, and directed him to go up and pay off the men without delay.

Now, Major Bramley, as well as Wills, belonged in Cumberland, and he was glad enough of this opportunity to run up there and spend a day or two at home. He lost no time in getting ready to start, and in the course of the afternoon looked in to see Wills and ask him if he had any word to send to his mother. He was surprised to find that Frank was going up too, and wanted him to go along that night. That was Thursday night, and Bramley's idea was to get up to Cumberland so as to have a full day at home Friday, pay off the troops Saturday, and then have another day at home Sunday. Frank, however, didn't want to go till morning. He had written to the gayest little girl you ever saw that he would be there Friday evening, and he didn't care about putting in an appearance before he was due.

"Well, then, Frank," said the major. "I want you to do me a little favor. I don't quite like to carry this box along with me at night. I want to sleep, so as to feel fresh to-morrow; and I never could sleep with this box on my mind. I wouldn't dare do it, any way. Now, you'll go through by daylight, when there won't be the slightest chance of any mishap. So, what I want you to do is to bring it along to-morrow. I'll call up at the house in the course of the evening and get it."

"All right!" said Frank. "But come up before eight o'clock, will you? I may be out after that time."

"Sure enough!" said the major, lowering his voice to the confidential key. "When is it coming off?"

"Monday morning. You must wait and see me through. I'd have asked you long ago if I had thought there was the slightest chance that you could come. St. John's at nine o'clock. Won't you?"

"Of course I will, old fellow," said the major, "with all my heart? Well, then, I'll see you to-morrow evening. Don't forget this box, whatever you do. You'll be a little excited in the morning, you know. Now I must be off."

"Hold on, major," said Frank; "what's in this box?"

"Nothing but the pay-roll and the cash—about forty-eight hundred dollars."

"All right!" said Frank.

Frank carried that box home to his room at Mrs. Portman's as unconcerned as if it had been a box of figs. This was not the first thing he had undertaken to carry with him the next day to oblige a friend, by the way. Mrs. Greenhay had asked him only that morning to take a cage of linnets to her sister, who lived in Cumberland, and of course he had consented. And Mrs Portman, who had taken a great fancy to Frank's mother when that lady had come down recently for a week's visit to her son, proposed to send Mrs. Wills a little flowering plant that the latter had greatly admired on that occasion, if Frank would be so kind as to take it. It is needless to say that Frank was so kind as to promise, without a moment's hesitation, to do so; but he was rather appalled the next morning, when the good lady brought it up to his room, to find that the little thing had a stalk about two feet high, and weighed, pot and all, not less than fifteen pounds.

So when he was finally ready to start he found that there was a good deal more of his baggage than there was of him—twice as much, at least; for besides these several little favors of his friends he had a big trunk and a valise of his own. By means of a wagon he got everything safely conveyed to the station, and it was not till he had reached it that he realized fully how heavily weighted he was. A bright thought struck him, however, almost immediately. There was room in his trunk for something, if he only had time to go through it and crowd things a little more. But then what could he put in it? Not the bird-cage, certainly, nor yet the flower-pot; and Bramley's box, of course it wouldn't do to put that in. It would go in, too. On the whole, why not put it in? Nobody knew what was in the old thing. There couldn't possibly be any risk. And so in it went. Then he got his check, and rushed off to get his seat; but another bright idea struck him, and he rushed back and checked his valise. So now he had nothing left to carry but his birds and his flower. By the time he had got fairly seated he discovered that he had no pocket handkerchief; and, leaving his birds and his flower to keep his seat, he rushed out to get one from his trunk, if possible. He found his trunk on a truck, with twenty or thirty others on top of it, but the baggage-men, with unparalleled kindness, sacked it out for him. Just as Frank had got its contents pretty much all spread out upon the floor—for of course the handkerchiefs were all at the very bottom—the men told him to hurry or they would all be too late. He threw things in rather promiscuously, and rushed for the train again, keeping an eye on his trunk, however, which he saw sail into the baggage-car just at the train began to move. He drew a long breath at that, and resigned himself to his birds and his flower.

He had not more than got himself comfortably settled in his seat again, however, when he began to have misgivings as to his entire prudence, after all, in trusting that cash-box out of his hands; and after assuring himself that he had his two checks safely lodged in his pocket-book, he resolved to avoid any possible risk of mischance by looking out for his trunk and making sure that it was not put off by mistake at a wrong station. Accordingly, every time the train stopped he stepped out and walked forward to see the baggage exchanged. All went smoothly enough till Baltimore was reached, but there he got into a peck of trouble. In the first place, when he looked in at the baggage-car door for his trunk it was no longer visible. In the next place, about forty trunks were tumbled out on the platform all at once, and among them he presently discovered his own, as he would have sworn. He was just on the point of making a disturbance about it, when he observed on one end of the trunk the letters "H. L. B.," very black and distinct, and instantly drew in his horns. By this time the baggage had been whirled on to the trucks and was rolling away in various directions, so that he could pursue his critical observations no farther. But Frank was not accustomed to borrow trouble, and he went back to his seat, reflecting that, as he had travelled the same road twenty times and never lost a trunk yet, there was no sort of reason to apprehend that he was going to lose one now. Nevertheless, he did not relax his vigilance, but was out at every station to observe the exchange of baggage, as before.

When at last the train reached Cumberland, and he caught sight from his car-window of just the gayest, etc. on the look-out for him, his soul instantly soared above baggage, as you might suppose. He made shift to remember his birds and his flower, it is true, and approached his lady-love appropriately flanked by those romantic emblems. The first greeting over, he descended from the clouds long enough to give his checks to the driver of the "baggage-express," and then went cooing home with his sweetheart. Arrived at that enchanted abode, he was beguiled into taking tea there before going to his own home, which was half a mile farther on.

When he did get home at last, it was dark; and there was so much talking to do that he never thought of his trunk till Bramley came in to get his box.

"My baggage came up, didn't it?" said Frank to his mother, just a little anxiously.

"Yes, dear, and I had the man carry it up to your room."

"All right! I'll give you your box in about a minute, major," said Frank, starting up-stairs.

"Do you mean to say you left that box to be carried up by a truckman?" asked the major, astonished.

"Oh, it's in my trunk," replied Frank, as if nothing could be more satisfactory.

"In your trunk! Well, by George, Frank! money weighs lightly on your mind, I must say!"

"Frank is to be married Monday morning, you know," said Mrs. Wills with a smile.

But Frank had gone on up-stairs, and escaped both these shots.

In about a minute he came down again, a good deal faster than he had gone up. His face was as white as this paper—just about.

"Mother, that infernal fool has left the wrong trunk here!" he cried. "Didn't you know that wasn't my trunk?"

"No, my boy, I did not; but I wouldn't get into a passion about it. You can find the man, can't you, and have him correct his mistake?"

Frank and the major started off on that quest without delay, you may be sure. The man was found in less than fifteen minutes. All he knew about the matter was that he passed Frank's checks to the baggage-master, and took the baggage that the latter gave him; and that was the only baggage he carried from the train.

"Must be some mistake about the checks," said he. "Better go to the baggage-master. I've known such things to happen before now."

Frank was beginning to feel hot and cold by this time. But neither he nor the major ventured to say a word till they had found the station baggage-master. That functionary went over his check-straps carefully, and found that his checks all matched.

"Must have got the wrong check at Washington to start with," said he, "I've known such things to happen where a lot of baggage came in late, and forty or fifty men were all howling at you for their checks at once. Passengers are no —— unreasonable! Better go back to Baltimore and get Keplinger—he's the general baggage agent—to telegraph over the line for your trunk."

"Why can't you do that?" asked the major.

"Well, I could, and I will if you say so, but, you see, we fellows don't mind each other's orders over sharp. But a word from Keplinger would set us all on the hunt in short order."

The major and Frank stepped aside and considered the matter. They agreed that it was best not to intimate that the trunk contained anything particularly valuable, and that on the whole they had better go back on the nine o'clock train to Baltimore, and see the baggage-agent as early as possible on the next morning.

It was a glum ride that, as you may guess, for both of them. Though they both went to bed, I don't think either of them slept much.

Fortunately, the baggage-agent proved to be uncommonly polite for a railroad man. "In less than half an hour," he said to Frank with a most reassuring smile, "I'll have every baggage-master between here and Chicago in full chase after your trunk, and I venture to say you'll get it in a couple of days. We don't often make a mistake of this kind, but such things will happen occasionally, and then the least we can do is to correct our blunder as promptly as possible."

Here he turned to his desk and began writing a dispatch.

"How shall I describe your trunk?" he asked, turning to Frank.

"Well, it's a pretty large trunk, and contains a lot of shirts and handkerchiefs marked with my initials, 'F. W.,' and—"

"Oh, no matter what it contains. I can't order all the pretty large trunks on the line to be opened to see what they contain, you know. Just describe the outside. Was it marked with your name or initials?"

"No, sir."

"Well—was there anything about it to distinguish it from other trunks?"

"I can't think of anything at this moment."

"It is astonishing," said the agent, "how negligent passengers are, as a rule, about marking their baggage. And their negligence doesn't end there, either. Now, I venture to say that you never thought to take the precaution, when you got your check, to compare it with the one on your trunk. Did you?"

"No. You're right."

"I thought so. Not one man in a hundred takes that simple precaution. Yet the men who check your baggage are only human like the rest of us, and it isn't strange that they make a mistake now and then. And when a mistake is made, down comes the passenger on us without the least mercy, putting all the blame on our shoulders, when by merely comparing his checks at the start all trouble would have been avoided. Now, can't you think of some sort of peculiarity about your trunk?"

"It had a spring lock. I have the key here."

"If I could only telegraph that key, now!" said the agent, with a smile just a trifle sarcastic.

Frank was nonplussed. I wonder how many of us, if we were suddenly called upon to render a description of our several travelling trunks, could do it satisfactorily? Frank was obliged to admit that he could not describe his.

"Well, then," said the agent, "we shall be spared the trouble and expense of hunting it up for you. I wonder if you could identify it if you should see it?" he asked Frank.

"Yes, I could," said Frank. "And now I'll tell you just what I believe: I believe that trunk has been stolen, and I'll tell you why. I saw a trunk put off at Baltimore that I would have taken my oath was my own; but just as I was going to speak about it, I saw some letters on one end of it that were not on mine, and that staggered me, and I said nothing. Now, I haven't said anything to anybody about this before, but I've been thinking about it all the time; and the more I think of it the more thoroughly I'm convinced that that was my trunk. Yes, sir; that trunk was stolen, and I'll tell you how. The thief, whoever he was, checked a trunk of his own, filled with sawdust or something of that sort, to Baltimore. Then, before the baggage was put on the train, he managed to transfer the check on his trunk to mine, and the one on mine to his own. Don't you see? Then when the train stopped at Baltimore all he had to do was to claim my trunk on his check and make off with it. But he had to provide against another contingency; the owner of the stolen trunk might happen to catch him at his little game; and so he stencils those letters, 'H. L. B.,' on it in order that he might point to them to prove that the trunk was his own. Those letters would floor any man, as they did me, at first sight. Now, I don't know how this may strike you, Mr. Keplinger, but I know that trunk was mine."

Mr. Keplinger said nothing for a minute or so, and then asked, suddenly:

"Where is the trunk you received on your check?"

"It's at home—in Cumberland."

"Bad! I wish it was here. Your supposition may be right, and it may be

wrong; I'm inclined to think myself it's all moonshine. But I'll tell you what I'll do. You telegraph home and have that trunk sent on here to-night. I'll open it, and if it proves to be a bogus affair, evidently put up for the purpose you suggest, I'll accept your theory and act upon it. But if it contains ordinary baggage, what then? That will knock the bottom out of your theory, won't it?"

Frank was constrained to admit as much, though he still insisted that the trunk marked "H. L. B." was his own. It was just possible that it might have been marked by mistake somehow, he said.

"Hardly," said the agent. "However, I have another motive for wishing to open the trunk you are going to send for. Its contents may show to whom it belongs. In that case it will be safe to conclude that there has been only a mistake in checking, as I have all along supposed; and we shall then know who has got your trunk, and can easily hunt him down and make things straight. I shouldn't be surprised, indeed, to get a dispatch at any moment inquiring about the trunk you've got. But come round to-night, when the last train comes in, and we'll see what we'll see."

Frank having telegraphed for the trunk, he and the major began to consider what they should do to kill the afternoon. Just then the 11 30 express arrived, and Bramley decided to run down to Washington and return in the evening. It occurred to him that it might be as well to go to the office and explain the state of things as early as practicable. This was Saturday afternoon, and he must either go now or wait till Monday.

It was well he acted as promptly as he did, for about five o'clock there came a dispatch to the paymaster-general's office from the lieutenant up at Cumberland, saying that Major Bramley had called on him the day before and told him he should pay off his men that day, but that, instead of doing so, he had mysteriously disappeared. The officer therefore thought it his duty to report the circumstance without delay to headquarters. Now, in the major's absence this would have had an ugly look. But he had already seen the general and explained the matter to him, frankly admitting his fault in trusting the money out of his own hands. That was all he could do.

The general was a man of few words, but Bramley could see that he was seriously annoyed. "You may remain here for the present," he said.

"I had expected, general, to go back to Baltimore this evening to look after the matter, but—"

"You may remain here for the present. This Wills—what kind of a young man is he?"

"He is employed in the office here, general. He is a friend of mine, and—"

"What kind of a young man is he?"

"Perfectly honest, so far as I know. He is about to be married to a daughter of Colonel Markely at Cumberland. You may know the family?"

"I know Colonel Markely. Has Wills any means, aside from his salary?"

"The young lady has expectations."

"Has Wills any means, aside from his salary?"

"Frank? Well, I know but little of his connections, but I think he depends upon his salary entirely at present."

"He could not make good this loss, then?"

"Oh, no! Impossible!"

"He is at Baltimore to-day, I think you said?"

"Trying to find his trunk—yes, sir."

"Will you do me the favor to carry this to the assistant secretary?" said the general, presently, handing Bramley a note.

"With pleasure, general."

This closed the interview. The major was under a cloud, you perceive, and his only consolation lay in the reflection that he had done his duty according to his light. "And now let the heavens fall if they must," he said to himself.

And Frank? Well, his first thought after being left alone was to write a hurried letter to that gayest little girl of his, explaining his absence and promising to return by the Sunday evening express. This letter he got off in the afternoon mail, and he could depend upon its being delivered Sunday morning. This done, he wandered about the streets, a prey to unpleasant reflections. It was infernally awkward to lose that dress-suit particularly, and be obliged to be married in the toggery he had on. If it were only to be a quiet wedding at home, it wouldn't matter so much. But in church! Lord! what would they think? etc., etc. As for Bram's money, that was simply awful! Awful! If he could only get his fingers on that, the rest of the traps might go and no questions asked. Yes, sir! Of course Bram was responsible, and not he; but then, as he had undertaken to carry the money, he ought to have been more careful. It was just awful! Awful! But he firmly believed that the trunk marked "H. L. B." was his trunk, and if so it certainly might be found. But then if it should be found the money would be gone, most likely, and the dence would be to pay, after all! Awful! Awful!

He was obliged at last to go back to the hotel, still a prey to unpleasant reflections. Arriving there, he found that Bramley had failed to come back on the evening train as he had proposed, and this circumstance added considerably to his gloom.

He was sitting in the reading-room about eight o'clock in the evening, pretending to read, and already exciting himself in anticipation of seeing that trunk opened, when a gentleman evidently from the country, who had been quietly reading for the past half hour, laid down his paper, took off his spectacles, rose and looked casually about the room. There was nobody in it except Frank and himself. After looking at Frank sharply two or three times, he approached him and extended his hand. 'I don't think I can be mistaken," said he; "you're from Cumberland, aren't you?"

"My home is there."

"I thought so. Your face looked natural the minute I set eyes on it."

"You are acquainted in Cumberland, then?" said Frank.

"I should think so! I live about two miles north. My name's Maltby ——?"

"I don't seem to recall it."

"Well, like enough. Fact is, I'm not an old settler; only been there about three years."

"And I've been in Washington nearly as long as that."

"Oh, well, then, of course you wouldn't remember me. But I've seen you about there, certain. I reckon you know the Markelys, and Willses, and Bramleys, and such? They're old families in that region."

"I know them all. I'm a Wills myself."

"Indeed! Your father lives—"

"My father is not living. My mother lives about half a mile east of town."

"Yes, yes—the Widow Wills: I remember. I didn't know but that you might belong— Yes, yes. By the way, if you know the Markelys, I'll lay a levy now you've got your eyes on that girl of theirs—eh, old fellow?"

Frank was obliged to blush.

"I thought so!" continued Neighbor Maltby. "All right! I wish you luck! I tell you what, that girl—I wouldn't say this before my old woman, you know, but between me and you and the gate-post, that girl— Well, if I was a young fellow, I'd show you what I think of that girl."

This last remark of the old man appealed irresistibly to Frank's strongest weakness, and he proceeded to unbosom himself without reserve on the subject of his relations to that girl. His new-found friend congratulated him in the heartiest manner upon his good luck in winning such a prize, and Frank returned the compliment by inviting him to the wedding on the spot.

"If I could only be there!" said the old man, dejectedly. "But I can't get round home before Tuesday. Ah, that's a rare girl! But look'ee here, my boy," said he, in an oracular tone, "have you counted the cost? It's a tremendous expensive luxury, that sort of a creatur'! I've got a daughter of my own about the age of that Markely girl, and as sure as you're born, it takes the heft of the profits off about two hundred acres to keep her afloat, year in and year out."

"I don't trouble myself about that sort of thing," said Frank, loftily. The old man had hit him in another tender spot.

"I'm glad to hear you say so," was the response. "I'd be sorry to see a girl like that hitched on to a poor man. It would be the worse for both of 'em."

Frank had nothing to say to this, so he only shrugged his shoulders.

"You're on the way up there now, I reckon?" said the old man.

Frank proceeded to explain his situation at length.

"Singularest thing I ever heard in my life!" exclaimed Mr. Maltby, as Frank concluded his story. "Do you mind if I go along and see that trunk opened?"

"I wish you would," said Frank.

And so he did.

And what do you suppose the trunk contained? It was crammed full of public documents.

"If that isn't a put-up job," exclaimed Frank, triumphantly, "then I'd like to know what it is!"

The agent was not quite so sure about it, but he owned there was ground for suspicion, especially as the trunk itself was both new and cheap. Upon reflection he resolved to give Frank the benefit of the doubt.

"I'll telegraph Monday morning," said he, "and find the trunk you claim, if possible. What was the mark?"

"H. L. B."

"Do you want to take the responsibility of having the party in possession of it arrested if he can be found?"

"By all means!" exclaimed Mr. Maltby, seeing Frank hesitate.

"Yes," said Frank, thus encouraged, "arrest him. I know it's my trunk."

"Well," said the agent, "look in to-morrow evening or the next morning. Good-night!"

"All right!" said Frank. "Good-night!" And he and Mr. Maltby started back to the hotel. They had gone but a little way, however, when the old man suddenly remembered that he wanted to ask the agent about a connection somewhere, and hurried back to the office for that purpose. He was gone but a minute or so, when he rejoined Frank, and they proceeded together to the hotel and retired.

The next morning Neighbor Maltby, who was an officer in the government secret service, as you may have guessed, quietly invited Frank to return to Washington with him, and the young man passed the following two or three days in strict seclusion. It appeared that somebody—I think myself it was the general—had undertaken to account for the loss of the money on the supposition that Frank had stolen it. This theory didn't hold water very long, though, and he was soon released. When he went to his room he discovered there had been a search-warrant there in his absence, and he had the pleasure of tacking down his carpet and putting things to rights generally. When he went up home the next day he found his mother's house had been favored with a similar visitation. There had even been a proposition to investigate Col. Markely's premises, but that old soldier had armed himself and objected, and the officers thought better of it. He was not disturbed.

I should have said that Frank had presence of mind enough, after he was arrested, to send a line by the up-train that morning to the gayest little girl explaining his lamentable situation, and exhorting her to bear up for his sake, and so forth. Of course she would see that the wedding, appointed for the next morning, was "off," as the horse-men say, till things should clear up.

(With the view of avoiding an anti-climax at the end of my tale, which I abhor, and which can only be averted by prompt measures, I beg to be allowed to say at this point that two weeks from the day first appointed the nuptials of Mr. Wills and Miss Markely were duly celebrated with much éclat. The groom's costume, in conformity with the prevailing custom in the best society, was restricted to the black frock-coat and white cravat, while the charming bride, whose beauty, as was universally remarked, shone with peculiar splendor on this joyous occasion, was attired in a lovely robe of pale green passementerie, trimmed with very elegant coiffures of purple valenciennes falling to the floor. Her hair, arranged in simple bandeaux in the style of Catherine de Medicis, was decorated with rouleaux of orange flowers à la mode. It would be pleasant to go on with this thing if the compensation were adequate. But it isn't, and life is short: let us resume.)

The next morning after his arrival home, Frank was summoned back to Baltimore to identify his trunk. When he reached there, Mr. Keplinger read to him a dispatch received two days before from St. Louis. It said:—

"Trunk marked 'H. L. B.' forwarded to your address last night. Party claiming it in custody, awaiting requisition from your governor."

"The trunk arrived this morning," said the agent. "Here it is. Do you recognize it? Is it your trunk?"

"It certainly is," said Frank. "But I never put that strap on it. And the lock has been changed, too," he added, as he tried to unlock it.

"You're getting nervous," said the agent. "Let me try." But he had no better success than Frank. "Are you sure this is the right key?" he asked.

"Yes."

"Perfectly sure? Look at it again."

"Perfectly sure."

"Very well, then, this is not the right trunk."

"I tell you it is my trunk," said Frank, doggedly. "Open it, and I'll convince you." But no matter what he said, he was by no means so confident as he had been before the trunk was shown him. To tell the truth, at the first sight of it his knees began to weaken, and now he was quaking all over with dread lest he had made an awful blunder.

"There you are!" said the agent, throwing up the lid.

It needed but a glance to show what the trunk contained—a lady's and baby's wardrobes nicely packed. Frank's condition at this discovery was deplorable to behold.

"Do you know what you've done, young man?" said the agent, looking through and through the poor fellow with his sharp eyes. "You've involved this company in a suit for damages that may cost them thousands of dollars."

"I confess that I'm down," said Frank; "I haven't a word to say for myself. You've been very obliging, and I thank you with all my heart. You can do what you like with me."

"Then I'll give you a piece of advice: The next time you start on a journey compare your checks. Good-day, sir!"

Frank backed out, and took the next train for home.

The agent started the trunk back to St. Louis at the earliest moment possible, telegraphed an order for the release of the party in arrest, and tendered to that party, on behalf of the company, the amplest apology for the blunder that had been committed. It was reported afterward that the matter was compromised at an expense to the company of about eight hundred dollars.

The very next morning Mr. Keplinger received a dispatch from Chicago inquiring for a missing trunk, "checked from Washington for Pittsburg, September —, contents valuable. Party received wrong check at Washington. Trunk his check calls for is here. Identify our trunk by 'D. H., Jeffersonville, Ill.,' written with pencil on right-hand end, near top."

Having read this dispatch, he drew out the humble receptacle of our national literature from his closet, turned the right hand end to the light, and there, in dim and crabbed characters, beheld the legend, "D. H., Jeffersonville, Ill." How his heart warmed to "D. H." for even that unsatisfactory token of a passenger not wholly depraved!

He started the trunk with its "valuable contents" on its way to Chicago without delay, telegraphed his action to the baggage-agent there, and requested that gentleman to forward the other trunk to him at once.

It arrived in due time, and Mr. Keplinger had the pleasure of telegraphing to Frank a second time to come and identify his trunk.

Frank went this time prepared, naturally, to be cautious about committing himself. Trying his key, however, and finding that it fitted the lock perfectly, his misgivings vanished, and he expressed his emotions in a series of exclamations that must be omitted here. He withdrew the key without so much as raising the lid, sat himself down upon the trunk, and declared his intention to maintain that position till Major Bramley could be brought from Washington. The agent kindly telegraphed the major, who was graciously granted a half-day's leave of absence, and in three hours he stood beside the momentous trunk.

"I was determined that I wouldn't touch your infernal old cash-box again if I had to sit here for a month," said Frank. "I'll open the trunk now, and I want you to get that box out of my sight just as quick as you can."

"Don't disturb yourself on that score," said the major.

"Now, Mr. Keplinger," said Frank to the agent, "there is a cash-box in this trunk which belongs to Major Bramley, which contains—how much does it contain, major?"

"Forty-eight hundred and twenty-nine dollars and seventeen cents."

"Great Heavens!" exclaimed the agent, "and you packed that box in a trunk! and that trunk without a scratch on it to show who owned it!"

"And I want you, Mr. Keplinger," continued Frank, unruffled by that gentleman's apostrophe, "to witness that Major Bramley takes possession of that box here in broad daylight, and that I refuse to touch it."

"Go on," said the agent.

Frank lifted the lid and fell back. Bramley dived into the trunk up to his shoulders, and came up—empty-handed! He glared at Frank, speechless.

Frank, also speechless, also dived, and also came up—empty-handed!

The agent took his turn, fished coolly and carefully, and came up—empty-handed!

The major was as pale as a spectre. Frank had quietly settled himself down on the carpet with a view to dying comfortably if he must die.

"Wrong trunk again, eh?" shouted Keplinger, jerking him up on his feet, as they do the dead man in the pantomime.

"It is my trunk—oh, yes," said Frank, settling down again, exactly like the dead man in the pantomime.

The agent, having reached the fruition of all his labors in this case in the finding of the missing piece of baggage, could well be pardoned for a rather cool contemplation of the consternation of his companions at the loss of the money, with which he had no concern. The major's rigid face relaxed at last, and Frank came to life suddenly—as the dead man does in the pantomime.

"Major," said he, "somebody has stolen that box; I told you so."

"I begin to suspect as much," said the major, cuttingly.

But his arrow missed its mark, for Frank had turned his eye upon the serene Mr. Keplinger, and the next moment, addressing that gentleman, exclaimed,

"The man who has had possession of this trunk must be arrested instantly."

"In that case," said the agent, still serene, "you will find a copy of this dispatch serviceable, as furnishing a clew to his identity." And he handed Frank the dispatch from Chicago."

"Do you mean to tell me," said Frank, growing red in the face, "that you are not going to help me any further?"

"Can't possibly," said the agent. "I have found your trunk; there my duty ends. But stay! I don't mind aiding you with a suggestion. It strikes me that a man who describes Congressional documents as 'valuable' wouldn't be likely to hanker much after more greenbacks."

"And it strikes me," said the major, "that the best thing you can do is to go back with me and make a clean breast of it to the general."

Frank, failing to perceive any course more feasible, acquiesced in the major's suggestion.

"But mind you, major," said he, "I'm not going to crawl. I'll just tell him exactly how the thing stands, and then he may do his worst. I know one person who'll stand by me, and—" Here his emotion got the upper hand of his vocal organs. He said no more.

When they reached the Washington depot they were obliged to wait a few minutes for the arrival of the horse-car, and as they were standing on the platform a railroad-man stepped up and touched Frank's elbow.

"See here, young man," said he, "didn't you go east about ten days ago, and wanted to do something with your trunk after they'd got it on the truck, and they pulled it off for you?"

"Yes, I did," said Frank, pricking up his ears.

"Just come along with me," said the railroad-man.

"What do you want with me?" said Frank, grown a trifle wary since his experience with Neighbor Maltby.

"Just come along with me," said the railroad-man.

The major expressing his willingness to go along with Frank, Frank went along with the railroad-man without further ado. The railroad-man led the way to the desk in the baggage-room.

"Do you know anything about this?" asked the railroad-man, setting down a dusty cash-box under Frank's nose.

"I rather think *I* do," said Bramley, seizing it with a grip of steel.

Frank stood transfixed.

The major whipped out his key, unlocked the box, ran over its contents, and locked it again in about one minute and a quarter. "It's all right, Frank," said he, to the life-like statue of that young man standing beside him.

"I reckoned you'd be after it before this time," said the railroad-man, addressing the same inanimate object. "You recollect you opened your trunk for something? Well, you forgot to put that box in when you shut it up again, and I didn't notice it till the train was off. (If I'd only a-knowed what was in it, now!) So I just set it up here on the shelf, thinkin when you missed it, you'd be a-sendin' for it. And I never thought of the old thing again till I saw you outside there just now."—*Lippincott's Magazine.*

ITEMS OF INTEREST.

☞ Never kick a man when he is down, unless you are sure he can't get up.

☞ A lady clergyman at Kittery, Maine, recently performed the marriage ceremony for her son.

☞ Crawford county mourns the death of a thirty-four year old horse.

☞ A new weekly paper, called the "Jim and Eliza Journal," has been started in Mississippi. Jim and Eliza are the editor and the wife.

☞ A man in Washington county, New York, recently eloped with his sister-in-law, aged thirteen.

☞ The Washington Star says every approach to both Houses of Congress is blocked with pie stands.

☞ In Michigan recently a boy, 13 years old, committed suicide to escape the brutal treatment of his father.

☞ A New Hampshire town defrayed the expense of providing a municipal hearse by giving a fancy dress ball.

☞ Samuel A. Adams was recently granted a divorce by a Vermont court on account of the "intolerable severity of Sarah, his wife."

☞ When a Boston editor parts his hair in the middle it is considered that "Superstition has its clammy grasp" on his intellect.

☞ Mme. Adelina Patti-Caux cleared 9,323 roubles and a diamond and pearl breast-pin at her recent benefit in Moscow.

☞ The Princess Pierre Bonaparte has opened a dressmaker's establishment in Bond street, London. She recently visited Paris to make purchases.

☞ A young gentleman at Kansas City sent seventy-five cents to New York recently for a method of writing without pen or ink. He received the following inscription on a card: "Write with a pencil."

☞ A lady of South Woodstock, Vt., smothered her infant child with too many wraps while out sleigh-riding lately.

☞ The Archbishop of Santiago declares that female voices in the choir are dangerous to true piety and devotion.

☞ We read that recently a lady had several hundred dollars' worth of point lace clipped off her clothing by an adroit thief, while she was at church singing, "Strip me of the robe of pride; clothe me in humility."

☞ A Vermonter who sold his farm and used all the money he got for it in buying a lottery ticket, drew $30 and a brass watch. He then threw himself upon a roaring buzz-saw and closed his eventful career.

☞ A Virginia railroad had to pay a lady $800 damages for carrying her several miles past the station for which she had taken a ticket.

☞ A man put his head through the window of an elevator tower in a Cincinnati hotel recently, and the elevator descending, cut it completely off.

☞ An enthusiast was turned out of the gallery of a Memphis theatre, the other night, for encouraging the antics of Miss Lydia Thompson with the delighted exclamations of "Bully for you, old tow-top! Good lordy, look at her kick!" Thus cruel fate chills the ardor of the most ingenuous spirit.

☞ The most confiding woman lives in Providence. She went to an auction, and, knowing the prevalence of thieves at such places, asked a nice-looking man to take care of her pocket-book, containing $80. He is still taking care of it.

☞ At Slatington, Pa., recently, a man was locked up in the station-house by his friends, while his son was prepared for burial, so that the father might keep sober for the funeral.

☞ The marriage custom of celebrating golden and silver weddings has been so burlesqued by the introduction of tin, wooden and even paper weddings, that it is proposed to abandon such celebrations altogether.

☞ They have dead-head suicides out West. At La Crosse, Wisconsin, recently, a man entered a store and inquired the price of a pistol. While examining the weapon, he slipped in a cartridge and blew his brains out.

☞ A Norristown youth sent his girl a box of grapes, one afternoon lately, and the next day a fellow met him on the street and said, "Those grapes were jolly good last night; send some up every Wednesday evening—that's my night, you know."

☞ REFRESHING.—A country debating society has unanimously decided, with a frankness that is refreshing, that "deception is sometimes necessary."

☞ A Western paper speaks of the house-cleaning season as that when divine woman has her own way at the house, while the "old man" takes his solemn repast from the top of the flour barrel, and, in sleeping, enjoys the freedom of the interval between his bedroom and the front fence. It is a season of meditation, whitewash and calm, unimpassioned profanity.

☞ The "Shakers" of Mount Lebanon, New York, want more men, women and children among them. Here is their advertisement: "Wanted—Men, women and children can find a comfortable home for life, where want never comes, with the Shakers, by embracing the true faith and leading pure lives. Particulars can be learned by writing 'The Shakers, Mt. Lebanon, New York.'"

☞ Mr. Thomas Frederick Guelph, claiming direct descent from George III. by his lawful wife, Hannah Lightfoot, asserts in virtue thereof, his title to the English throne, and also enters a caveat for the principality of Wales through his maternal inheritance from Llewellyn, the last of the Welsh monarchs.

☞ A FINE CLIMATE.—Mr. Leland, in his "Egyptian Sketch Book," records that the climate is so uniformly fine in Egypt that it ceases to be a subject of remark. The natives, having no changes in the weather to talk about when they meet, substitute compliments, and what the Chinese call "handsome talkee."

☞ The newest kind of tea-tables are oval, having brass handles, so that they and the whole tea equipage are brought in at once. They are in the form of a kind of double table, having a smaller one above fastened to the principal one by four legs. The cake and bread and butter are placed underneath the smaller one in the centre, the tea cups all around, and the cream, sugar, and tea on the upper one.

☞ A remarkable instance of mortality in a single family took place lately near Binghamton, N. Y. On Sunday, December 28th, last, Mr. and Mrs. Holiday celebrated the sixty-fifth anniversary of their wedding at Downsville, Delaware County. At that time sixteen children of the family, of which Mr. Holiday was the eldest, were all living, and fourteen brothers and sisters of Mrs. Holiday were also in good health and present at the anniversary. Since then the entire number, thirty—all, in fact, excepting Mr. and Mrs. Holiday—have died.

☞ Boone county, La., has a curiosity in the form of a burning gas well. A local journal says that in boring for water in the vicinity of Boone, the auger went down sixty-five feet without finding any. It was then noticed that a gas was emitted from the hole, which ignited upon a light being applied, burning with a bluish flame, which varied in height from fifteen to twenty feet.

☞ At a recent wedding in New York, among the bridal presents was carelessly displayed a check for $100,000, drawn to the order of the bride and signed by her father. One of the guests was the cashier of the bank on which the check was drawn. He was one of those disagreeable people who can never appreciate a joke, and who always delight in telling the truth when it is unpleasant to somebody else. This gentleman threw a damper on the spirits of the party, by declaring that the generous father of the bride never had more than half $100 000 to his credit in the bank since his account was opened.

☞ A Paris correspondent, speaking of the Ville de Havre disaster, says: "Of the fourteen young children on board only one was saved. As she came to the surface she instinctively caught at the first object floating past, and said to a lady who hung on the other side, 'I can't die so!' A wilful, petted child, she even now struggled against the general fate. Her story of the shipwreck is shorter than many, but full of pathos: 'There was a great crash, and they called to come on the other side; then I was in the water'—she does not remember having gone down—'and I clung to a pair of steps. I was getting tired, very tired, but Miss —— told me to hold on; then a boat came and took us off. I don't remember going on board the big ship, but they gave me some brandy; then I was dreadfully sick, and took off my clothes and put on me a man's shirt, and put me to bed.' She hugs her doll, and looks up with her large blue eyes, which never until now saddened, and remembers and seems to mourn over the fate of a kitten which floated past and she wished she could have saved."

The Scarlet Letter.

It is recorded that in the year 1753 a woman stood for an hour in the pillory near the Town House, amid the scoffs and jeers of the multitude. "The Scarlet Letter" is no myth; Hawthorne had but to turn to the criminal records of the colony for the dramatic incidents he has related. The General Court enacted in 1695 a law to prevent marriages of consanguinity, the declared penalty of breaking which was that the man or woman offending should be set upon the gallows for an hour, with a rope about the neck, and in the way from thence to the common jail be severely whipped. The offenders were forever to wear a capital letter "I," cut out of cloth of a color different from their clothes, on the arm or back, in open view. If the culprit removed the letter, he or she was to be further whipped. No doubt there were Hester Prynnes thus branded and scourged in State street.—"*Landmarks of Boston.*"

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STRANGE.

How strange it will be, love—how strange when we two
Shall be what all lovers become!
You rigid and faithless, I cold and untrue;
You thoughtless of me, and I careless of you
Our pet names grown rusty, with nothing to do;
Love's bright web unravelled, and rent and worn through,
And life's loom left empty—sh, hum!
Ah, me!
How strange it will be!

How strange it will be when the witchery goes,
Which makes me seem lovely to-day;
When your thought of me loses its *couleur de rose*;
When every day serves some new fault to disclose,
And you wonder you could for a moment suppose—
When you find I've cold eyes, and an every-day nose—
I was out of the commonplace way;
Ah, me!
How strange it will be!

How strange it will be, love—how strange when we meet
With just a still touch of the hand;
When my pulses no longer delightfully beat
At the thought of your coming, the sound of your feet;
When I watch not your coming far down the long street:
When your dear loving voice, too, so thrillingly sweet,
Grows harsh in reproach or command;
Ah, me!
How strange it will be!

How strange it will be when we willingly stay
Divided the weary day through;
Or getting remotely apart, as we may,
Sit chilly and silent, with nothing to say;
Or coolly converse on the news of the day,
In a wearisome old married-folk sort of way!
I shrink from the picture—don't you?
Ah, me!
How strange it will be!

Dear love, if our hearts do grow torpid and cold,
As so many others have done;
If we let our love perish with hunger and cold;
If we dim all life's diamonds and tarnish its gold;
If we choose to live wretched and die unconsoled,
'Twill be the strangest of all things that ever were told
As happening under the sun!
Ah, me!
How strange it will be!

COMPENSATION.

BY SPHINX.

"I can manage to drop in, you know—a pretty woman is a perfect God-send at any time!" exclaimed the taller and darker of two gentlemen, who were boon companions in art, and had after rapid travelling taken breath, as it were, at Sorrento.

The other man had not raised his eyes during the flippant remark, and indeed his compressed lips seemed hardly to open in uttering the laconic, "Well!" that fell from them. Launt Hartleigh scanned him sharply. "By Jove!" he exclaimed inwardly, "does the fellow love her?" then outwardly, "Ames, you met them at Angsburg, did you not? What a fool I was to have left you there!"

Lindley Ames raised his gray, searching eyes to the face of his companion in astonishment.

"I had no idea you cared so much to meet Miriam Helmsley.

"Neither did I, my dear fellow, till I saw your picture of her—and that—"

"And that can convey no idea of her!" burst forth the other, excitedly. "I'm going to make a complete failure of it, I see that! I wish you would undertake it, Hartleigh!"

The latter shrugged his shoulders. "Much obliged! imagine George Helmsley's chagrin at finding his ideal artist coolly handing his darling daughter to me to paint—he would as soon have her sit for Satan himself."

"Is it possible you know her father, Hartleigh?"

"Well, yes—he settled some of his son's old scores with me once. Young Helmsley was a very heavy swell at one time, and had more expenses than money, and he relieved his mind by borrowing a little here and there, before he went the way of all sinners. Well, au revoir, mon ami! Tuesday, you said? H'm—au revoir!"

The door closed—and the man who sat in his Joseph's coat, with his easel before him, arose and flung aside his brushes, and pushing apart the curtain of his window gazed out upon the sapphire bay of Naples. The fascination of sky and water seemed to impart a reality to the most ideal visions he had ever possessed. He reviewed, however, that happy-go-lucky time in Bavarian Germany, recalling the simple cottage, where friends so often meet friends, or intimacies are formed with comparative strangers. Very cordially and naturally had he met and recognized his father's old friend, George Helmsley, who had duly presented him to his daughter Miriam. Upon comparing their plans at the railway station of Hof, it was not surprising that a lonely man like himself should change his route slightly for the sake of agreeable company. "And then," Mr. Helmsley had added, "Sorrento is just the place for an artist." So he, himself, had thought as its magic coloring drifted in a charming maze of idle witchery into the recesses of his inmost being.

Tuesday came and, with the day, the lady, her father bidding her good-bye at the door. In the short time the artist had known her he had been struck by her marvellous repose. She was the large type of ordinary height, and her head was simply magnificent, but rather out of proportion to the slender neck and drooping shoulders. At first he had resolved that the painting should be a vignette, but entirely dissatisfied with the attempt, he began his study afresh. Having made the lights and shadows of the room satisfactory to himself and to her, he requested her to turn a three-quarter face toward the light side of the studio. In so doing her eyes fell upon that wondrous piece of sculpture called "The blind girl," and before he could object Miriam Helmsley was standing before it.

"Do you notice as the light strikes the back of the hand, the palm is pink?" she asked, examining the uplifted fingers.

"Yes: the marble is of the finest, and is thoroughly susceptible to the dainty chiselling of the curve; the lobe of the ear, also, you observe, is as delicate as a seashell," he replied.

"But the face, how pathetic! and yet not pretty; but half-painful, half-eager!" she exclaimed, altering her position slightly. "I can just feel with her!" she muttered, poising her own superb head slightly to the left.

"And in so doing, you have at once decided your own position for the portrait," he said, placing her chair near the marble, and bringing his easel in front of her. She was so interested as not to notice him or his changes, and he waited some minutes seeing a painful and rather absorbed look stealing over her face, when she began protesting against the idea strongly, to his surprise. "To wear the attitude of listening? Oh, no; if you are as keenly alive to sound as I am, it would give you most intense headache." He said no more, and found that her eyes were fixed thoughtfully on the bay gleaming with white sails in the noontide. He had before him what would gladden the heart of any artist, and yet proceeded to sketch the large outlines of the head with a forewarning of utter failure. With regular features and decided tints of hair and eyes, he tried to see that his work would be easy; but when she turned her face inquiringly toward him, he looked away. With no hint of color, the tint was one in which you never expected it; you could not think particularly of health or ill-health, but of its remarkable purity. Her hair was neither wavy or curly, but very dark and soft, and clearly defining in silky backward folds the majestic temples. Her mouth (the sweetest feature of the face,) looked as if it could keep its own secrets; and about the massive marble chin there were curves of unmistakable beauty. In the eyes there was a hidden mystery of darkness one often notices in an infant, as it opens them upon the world, after slumber sweet and profound. The lids usually drooped partially over them, and the long, upward, curling lashes just veiled the steadfast shining, and imparted a settled melancholy that was not born of discontent, but as of a spirit that had already opened them upon another world, yet still beheld the care and sorrow of this one.

For many days she had been coming and going, and with every arrival and departure he had felt her to be, to him (a friendless man,) nearer and farther. Her nature was one of such simple sincerity, that no one seemed to embarrass her, and she lost herself time and again unreservedly in many of the pictures and marbles, without apology for her thoughts of them, and yet so unhesitating in exposing anything concerning them of which she was ignorant, that though willing to enlighten her, he yet felt himself to be the learner in the end. He was, upon this day, working away silently and peacefully, when happening to raise his eyes suddenly, he saw her as nearly in the position of the statue she had so regarded, as he had wished her to be a half hour before. At first it occurred to him she had done it purposely, to please or amuse him; but soon found it was involuntary and that her face had grown into an intensity of anguish. The windows were open, and he heard nothing but a steady footfall, and the distant song of a boatman, but that was too indistinct to have caught her ear. He looked out of the window, and saw Launt Hartleigh walking below, and for the first time he noted the curiously steady, heavy footfall, giving one the impression of a man whose self-control was undeniable, whose will was masterful, whose intentions were full of confident purpose. Lindley Ames turned toward her, perplexed; her closed eyes opened into his, and her uplifted hand fell heavily upon the chair-back, the face was no more the one he had been endeavoring to portray than if a mask had slipped aside.

He sighed heavily, and dropped a curtain over the portrait. The door opened, Launt Hartleigh entered, closed it, stood with his back against it and smiled. The woman had risen slowly, very slowly, from her seat, and stood waiting with a sort of undefinable grandeur in her attitude, and a divinity of sorrow in her face.

"Well, Mrs. Hartleigh!" he exclaimed, "I am sorry to have interrupted any tête-à-tête, but Mr. Ames will probably thank me for a correct introduction—my wife! Mr. Lindley Ames!"

She was hardly prepared for the outcry—

"My God! and I loved her!"

Then there fell upon the three a silence—one that waits for the anguish of a heart cry—one that fills the room, striking doom to all living—one that bears, after a minute, the few faint sounds of a city in at a window, or the ebb and flow of some sad sea, whose waves lap a quiet shore—but what they heard just then, was the dying, distancing cadence of a boatman's song. She heard it now—as he had caught it two minutes before—and her hand sought her heart, as one who covers a wound after probing. She dragged herself by some superhuman effort, to the spot whereon Lindley Ames stood, as if death had stricken him standing. She opened her lips to speak, but no sound issued therefrom. She placed her hand upon his shoulder heavily; and impelled by some power, he raised his face, as a man in a nightmare fixes his eyes in frozen terror upon some familiar object.

"My friend!" the words burst forth, "it is true; but I have left him—our roads are separate. We, my father and I, will leave this place to-day!"

"Not so, my lady—not so!" interrupted Hartleigh; "I have not traversed all Europe to finally secure such success. If you go, I go with you, as your lawful husband. That you cannot deny."

"I deny nothing; but so long as I have a father, his home is mine; no law can prevent that, though it does refuse a divorce."

A divorce! A shiver crept over Lindley Ames. Then, with a sudden self-forgetting manfulness, he stepped between them—a firm, resolving fire shining in his pale face—

"Can you not forgive each other—here and now. What is it that separates you?"

Hartleigh burst into a cold, fiendish laugh. "That's exactly it? What indeed is it? The lady before you knows full well that she cannot bring into any court of justice, any reason strong enough to secure a divorce—hers is a superior, ethereal nature, dissatisfied with the support and companionship of the mortal man she accepted to love, honor and obey forsooth! She cannot at this minute complain of want, of cruelty, of neglect—in fact of anything on the face of the earth."

"True!" she rejoined, "of course any court of justice would laugh in the face of any woman who refused simply to live with a man who married her for money, and daily and hourly told her so—who never failed to surround her with companions who were in every way obnoxious—and who made her, his wife, the object of their pity, their jests, their sneers."

"'For better or for worse,' was part of the marriage vow, my dear madam, and as it seems to you so certainly the latter, I should think a person of your lofty nature would enjoy a saintly reputation for endurance and heavenly-mindedness!"

"God knows I tried to keep those vows, and failed. He can make me responsible, I know," she said, her head bowed down upon her breast in an agony of remorse and repugnance.

"Well," said Hartleigh, with a shrug of the shoulders, "I leave you with a knowledge of my intentions, and you can convey them with my profound regard to your father, and further tell him his interference will run a heavier risk than he perhaps allows to occur to him," and he was gone.

They stood immovable. Then she sank down on a sofa and wept as only a woman who has had her eyes opened to sin and her soul slowly poisoned can weep. The man whom she had called "friend" stood looking on, his face still retaining the ashen hue "of a broken spirit," but the eyes strong in love, in sympathy, in suffering. He had never loved her as he loved her now, when he dared not take her hand even to comfort her. He had to listen to the muffled, heart-rending sobs with tearless eyes and clenched hands; and at last, when with an awful effort she mastered her grief and turned toward him with that sublime innocency of expression he had so worshipped in her face, he could have fallen at her feet; but the usual repose was stealing quietly over her, and her quivering lips were settling into the sweet resignation that intense suffering so often leaves, and his eyes sank before hers. If he had raised them and seen the flush stealing slowly over the delicate face, he would have decided his own fate disastrously, but he felt her take his hand in deepest sympathy and gratitude, and say simply, "Good-bye, my dear friend!" and was alone—oh, so alone!—that in complete reaction of feeling he turned with maddened eyes toward the door with some hasty purpose of following her. Then the thought died out and his heavy eyes fell upon the face of the blind girl, whose face, like Miriam Helmsley's, seemed to quiver with painful anticipation; then shutting out the sound of her dying foot-falls, he lay down, stricken, at its very feet.

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Three years elapsed, and in the late autumn of '71 Lindley Ames returned to America. From the day the Helmsleys had left Sorrento he had heard nothing of or from them. The soul of his artist life had departed; if he had dependod upon that for his living he should have died of starvation, but by the death of his father (having inherited the portion of an only son), he could, as his friends said, "afford to be an idler." He entered, however, into mercantile life for the mere purpose of imposing upon himself some task that would partially smother, and if possible kill the worm of unquenched grief gnawing incessantly in his heart. To suffer is to endure a pang, but to suffer for those we love is to part with our vitality slowly and surely. A hope had once flashed over him that seven years of separation between husband and wife can insure their mutual freedom, but here a blush of shame mounted to his brow, for was there not the remembrance of his own efforts at a reconciliation? So he closed the door of his heart and understanding upon this intruder, and went his way a desolate man.

And Miriam Helmsley? She accompanied her father to Rome, and Launt Hartleigh, true to his promise, was their shadow. In one month from that time her father sickened and died of Roman fever. Then she neither knew nor cared what happened. When her husband came and took her away with him, she made no resistance. Like some marble woman in her sweeping mourning robes, without a single recognizing glance of anything, she left—she disappeared.

Two years later they were in Paris, but all people knew of her was the fact of her being as her husband termed it "depressed—a family failing, though," he added, with a sigh, as if he had been the victim of some terrible imposition; and people congratulated "Monsieur" on his gayety, his hopefulness under the shadow of insanity, as he constantly must be, they thought. Once she had written a formal letter to Lindley Ames, and sent it to his old address in Sorrento, telling him simply of her father's death; there may have been some faint hope that he would keep a watch on her husband, as she was now entirely alone in her grief. The letter, however, never reached him, as he had left for America long before. She knew another night of horror, and then she returned to her native land.

A large assembly of Hartleigh's gay friends were congregated at his residence; he had, as usual, insisted upon his wife's presence. She was sitting among the half-inebriated, chattering throng like a mournful ghost, when she heard her husband exclaim, "Here's to the prolongation and future jollity of my own life," and then fall heavily forward. She was still sitting when they raised him, and had not risen when the hastily-summoned physician exclaimed decisively (not noticing her presence), "Unmistakably a case of heart disease. Gentlemen, it is all over!" She remembered that some one took her out of that chair, in which she seemed frozen; and accurately she recalled the days that he lay dead in the house, and the days that the steamer bore her away from the land where she had left them both—father and husband. Some kind friends had telegraphed to her cousins in America, and when they met her at the steamer they shrank back in amazement. There was no trace of the woman who had left her native shore a happy bride, and who had stood on the deck of the outward-bound steamer, between her father and husband, with the intention of joining the only son and brother at Dresden.

They found that as the days and weeks passed there was no change in her. She neither spoke or smiled, except when addressed, and sought the seclusion of her own room almost entirely. The children often went up there and nestled lovingly in her lap and prattled to her, and once their father said, "Why do you trouble Cousin Miriam? Does she talk to you and tell you stories?"

"Oh, no; she likes us to talk. We tell her all she does not know, and she likes it."

Simple truth! they told her unconsciously, that there was yet in the world something sincere, trustful, beautiful.

One day when the dead horror of her past seemed to have reached its stoniest phase she heard one of the children calling her to come out-doors. Putting on her hat mechanically, she followed the little, beckoning figure quite without the limits of the place. Bessie ran across a field, still with little, graceful antics alluring the lady into a small nook of her own, where a hollow tree held many woodland treasures—tiny forest-cups of broken acorns, bits of moss and shining scarlet berries—little, wild, striped leaves growing demurely in pieces of broken shell. The child pointed out a seat the boys had manufactured for her near by, and then proceeded to do the duties of hostess.

"Oh, wait!" she called out, hastily. "I have forgotten the honey and the little tin plates. Bart says if I am to play the part of a good fairy, I must have real fairy food. Look, Cousin Miriam, here is the cherry-gum the boys brought for me; and now don't you eat it while I'm gone."

Promising with a faint smile perfect obedience to the "good fairy," the lady sat still, her hands clasped in the old listless manner, and around her the insect world made drowsy melody, while below and above breathed forest mysteries in sweetest luxuriance. Suddenly a bird in the tree above her, burst forth into rapturous singing. Everything about her spoke of life, of motion, and happiness; she seemed to herself the only dead thing about. The bird continued his roundelay as if the apathetic listener below him, despite her closed eyes and immovable face were drinking it all into her heart. A faint curious awakening to a response seemed stirring in her veins; the fine white mask of the face began to break up into quivers; the eyes grew dim; her lips parted into the passionate utterance of one line of "Boony Doon!"—

"How can ye sing, ye little bird,
And I so weary, fu' o' care?"

but the voice seemed but the effort to bring back the lost chord of some harp, that had hung as mute as that on Tara's walls—

"The chord alone that breaks at night, its tale of ruin tells."

A man's shadow fell athwart the path, but she did not see it; she had again, it seemed, endeavored to shut out the sound and sight of the innocent things that appealed to the poor broken heart. The face of this man convulsed, as he looked at her; his countenance was worn and thin, and the wells of his deep, gray eyes seemed like the leaden color of the sea on cloudy days, but now their changeful lights were wonderful. He saw no trace of age or suffering in the face before him; it was simply a blank. The beauties of feature, of outline were still there, but all expression seemed to have entirely fled. It was as if in some past hour the lightning of sin had suddenly blasted the soul, and left the beautiful body, a marble monument to its former life.

Lindley Ames had come to her, knowing that he was free to claim her, if she did but love him; but as he looked, there seemed to him little possibility of ever bringing that poor heart to life again, or even awakening one indignant throb for its past. He uttered her name very softly, and the eyes opened without a sign of recognition in them.

"Miriam! Miriam!" the eyes grew wider; his own were filled with tears. He took the listless hands in his. "Love me! love me!" he said, kissing her gently on the forehead. "Try and love me, dear!" No surprise or gladness was there; she looked up into his face, very much as a little child might who tries to understand, but her countenance did not change. With her pathetic eyes still fastened on his, she said, wearily, "I am tired, my friend," then laid her head upon his breast. He folded his arms about her and uttered some thankful exclamation in bending his face down to hers, only to find her utterly insensible.

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Weeks and months of illness followed, and when the summer flowers bloomed and waited for her again, her invalid chair was carefully wheeled among them all, that she might drink in some of their life and fragrance; and the man who pushed it slowly down the sun-lit paths, paused now and again to put back from his forehead the locks that had grown white about the temples, but the face was more youthful than formerly, and the infinite tenderness of the eyes was still there—patient, enduring. The woman, in one of these pauses, looked up with a smile, stretched out her arms, and drew the face down to hers. "God bless you!" she said, simply.

Yes, after the storm, had come the happy and peaceful eve.

STORIES FOR SUNDAY EVENINGS.

MAMMA.—"So now, Maggie, you understand all the story of Lot's wife—don't you?"

MAGGIE.—"Yes; but I want to know where all the salt comes from that isn't made out of ladies."

A PRINCESS OF MONACO.

About four years ago the young prince of Monaco, a little princedom of Italy, married, through the influence of the Empress Eugenie, the Lady Mary Douglas, sister of the Duke of Hamilton and daughter of H. I. H. the Princess Mary of Baden, Duchess of Hamilton, and grand-daughter of the celebrated Prince Eugéne Beauharnois. The wedding was magnificent, and the bride and bridegroom appeared exceedingly well pleased with each other. After a brief honeymoon both their highnesses returned to Monaco to reside with the reigning prince and princess. Very soon afterward the young lady commenced making bitter complaints to her friends of the court etiquette, which she declared was utterly unendurable, especially to a free-born Englishwoman. An instance will suffice: One morning her Serene Highness came down to breakfast before the whole family was assembled. To her amusement she beheld on each plate an egg labelled "For His Serene Highness the reigning prince," "For H. S. H. the reigning princess," "For H. S. H. the hereditary prince," "For H. S. H. the hereditary princess." Being in a hurry and hungry, "Her Serene Highness the hereditary princess" sat herself down and ate her own egg and the eggs of her neighbors. Horror! Court etiquette was overthrown. The egg destined for the august Prince Florestan II. had been eaten by his own daughter-in-law! The outraged majesty of Monaco was indignant, and the youthful aspirant to the throne by no means mild in his reproaches. However, true Douglas as she is, the old blood of Archibald Bell-the-cat boiled over, and the Princess Mary is reported to have read the serene family a famous lecture. Matters went on in this way until the poor girl could stand it no longer, and one fine day escaped from "jail," ran down to the station and took the first train for Nice. A telegram was sent to the gendarmerie at Nice to arrest her as soon as she got out of the carriage. Accordingly, to her terror, when she put her foot on terra firma there stood two gendarmes ready to pounce upon her. It was, however, no joke to arrest an imperial princess, for such Lady Mary is by birth. The men hesitated, but not so the princess. Brought up at Nice, she knew all the roads and bypaths of the place by heart. Tucking up her petticoats, instead of going out by the ordinary exit, she made off as fast as her heels could carry her out of the station to the fence which separates the lines from the road, climbed over it, and ran as swiftly as a hunted deer through the fields, pursued by the two gendarmes, who, however, soon gave up the chase. Her Serene Highness finally reached the Villa Arson, almost two miles distant, terribly frightened, and with her clothes pretty nearly torn off her back. Here she found that noble-hearted and Christian woman her mother, from whom she has never since separated. Nor has she yielded up to her husband her little son, born soon after the flight from Monaco. Vain have been the young man's attempts to induce her to return to him, vain his appeals to the Pope to use his influence, vain even the threats of law. Last winter the prince induced the king of Italy to permit an attempt to abduct the child from the princess whilst she was staying in Florence with the Grand Duchess Marie of Russia, but the guards of the imperial lady prevented the emissaries of the Florentine syndic from even entering the palace, and the next day the princess of Monaco fled with her child to Switzerland. What the future developments of this singular affair will be time will show. The husband seems determined not to yield, and has recently employed the celebrated lawyer M. Grandperret as his counsel. It is stated that undue influence of a malicious kind has been used to prejudice both the Duchess of Hamilton and her daughter against the prince, but all who know the truly lofty mind of the duchess will be sure that, although the reason for the princess's conduct has never transpired, it must be a very good one, or her mother would never uphold her as she does. Not the slightest blame is attributable to the princess of Monaco, and her reputation remains utterly above suspicion.

Men and Women.

When I was a boy we used to discuss in the debating societies of my native place, among other questions equally wise and equally insoluble, that of the relative superiority or inferiority in native talent of the two sexes. The same sage and solemn question was also gravely discussed by our class in college when we were grave and reverend seniors, and in the presence of the venerable Dr. Humphrey. I do not remember the arguments of the students, though of course they were very wise and entirely conclusive on both sides. But I well remember the decision of our honored president, which was as follows:—1. Men are superior to women. 2. Women are superior to men. 3. Neither the one nor the other are superior. I do not propose to argue that question. It is a fundamental principle in mathematics that there can be no ratio between unlike quantities. We do not measure flowers, as we do corn and potatoes, by the half-bushel. It is idle to discuss the question which are the stronger, the golden beams of truth, or the silken cords of love. They must be twisted or woven together if you would make a bond of power and influence that is quite irresistible. But they must be spun apart, and you must take good heed that you do not spoil or soil either in the twisting or weaving process. It is not worth while to ask which is the more valuable implement, the needle or the drill and crowbar—which the more useful, the sewing-machine or the mower and reaper. They are both invaluable in their places, each utterly useless in the place of the other. And even Mr. Beecher would not argue that there was any great wisdom or economy in manufacturing the needle or the crowbar, or even the sewing-machine and the reaper, in the same shop. The wood and the iron—the raw materials—may be gotten out in mass and wrought into some manageable form together. But any manufacturer would prefer to fashion and finish the needle or the sewing-machine in a special factory. It were folly to inquire which is the richer and sweeter music, bass and tenor or alto and soprano. They must unite to make up the anthem of the Creation. But there must be a great deal of separate training before you can produce either a Mario or a Nilsson. And to set either one trying to sing like the other would spoil both.—*W. S. Tyler.*

☞ A SEASONABLE JOKE.—Talking about upsetting sleighs, Wicks remarked to a young lady he was taking out to drive, "I always pick out the softest place I can, when I upset my sleigh." She replied, "Why, I should think it would grow monotonous; always falling on your head."

☞ There is much more to be said in favor of most men than we generally think. The truth is that we care too little about finding out the good things.

Answers to Correspondents.

PAY YOUR POSTAGE.—Authors and others often send us letters and manuscripts not fully paid. In these cases the Department here enforces payment of the deficiency—which we either have to pay, or to decline receiving the letters or manuscripts. Authors will also bear in mind that the Department now requires letter postage on all manuscripts—therefore it is often cheaper, as it is always safer, to send large packages by express.

We cannot undertake to answer questions relating to the acceptance or rejection of manuscripts in this column. And there is no occasion of writing to ask whether we will examine a manuscript. Send it on, and we will examine it; keeping a copy, to avoid all danger of loss—as we do not hold ourselves responsible for the safe return of manuscript.

H. D. S. (N. Y.,) asks: "1st. Do I write a good business hand, and how about my composition? 2d. What is a good book to commence reading law in? 3d. Is J. S. C. Abbott a good historian? 4th. What is a good thing for removing superfluous capillary adornments from the face? 5th. Is vulgarity on the increase or decrease?" 1st. It would be if you were more careful. Your composition is good, except your second question, which is awkwardly worded. 2d. The book usually placed in the hands of young law students is Blackstone's Commentaries. 3d. He is a better romancer. 4th. A razor. 5th. We do not know—we think on the decrease, so far as manners are concerned.

C. J. K., (Yelm Prairie, W. T.,) asks: "1st. Was John Brown, of Harper's Ferry fame, legally tried by the authorities of the State of Virginia or by a mob? 2d. Do you think the United States would be justifiable in engaging in war with Spain? 3d. What is the length of the river Nile in Africa? 4th. Is the —— railroad bursted up or not? 5th. What are the necessary requisites for a manufacturing State? 6th. Is there any country on the globe that produces as large timber in as great quantities as Washington Territory?" 1st. By the legal authorities. 2d. It would depend upon the provocation. 3d. Probably about 3,000 miles. 4th. No. 5th. Plenty of coal or good water power, communication with the world by rail or water; plenty of home or outside capital, and brains to use it; and an abundance of labor are among the necessary requisites of manufacturing. 6th. Probably not; some of the South American forests are of immense extent, however.

S. A. J., (Hushville, Indiana,) asks: "1st. Is it proper to say we will sing 'on page 20,' or 'from page 20'?" Either form is proper. We should say, sing the song (or hymn) on page 20.

C. O. C. asks: "Who are the three richest men in the United States, and how much tax do they pay annually?" William B. Astor, Cornelius Vanderbilt and A. T. Stewart are reputed to be the three wealthiest men in the country, but whether they really are, no one knows, not even the individuals themselves. The late Horace F. Clarke died, supposing himself to be worth several millions, but since his death the estate has gone into bankruptcy. The recent enormous shrinkage in values has left a very narrow margin for many men to make the estimates of their fortunes on, especially in the case of those largely engaged in speculative enterprises.

"MOLOC." We cannot republish the article you refer to. As it appeared only a few weeks since, you can easily obtain it by a search among recent numbers of THE POST. Your handwriting and spelling are both fair.

MARYLAND, (Sharpsburg.) David Crockett was a most "real" person, not a character of fiction. He was born in Tennessee in 1786; served in the Legislature of that State; was the greatest bear hunter in the western country; fought under Jackson in the Creek war; was elected to Congress about 1830; amused the country by his quaint speeches and writings, some of which were as wise as they were quaint; went to TEXAS, and fell heroically fighting in the war for the independence of that State. He was an unpolished hero—a diamond in the rough—but none the less worthy on that account. His famous saying, "Be sure you are right, then go ahead," ought to be adopted as our national motto; there can be no safer and better one.

M. E. P., (Clay, N. Y.) We know nothing of the "Map and Engraving Co.," concerning which you inquire.

JUNE, (Tiskilwa, Ill.) We cannot answer questions relative to our writers.

"NORRISTOWN." 1st. The age of miracles may not be past, but we are inclined to believe it is. 2d. We would not try the article you refer to. 3d. Your friend is mistaken in what he asserts.

H. B., (Norwalk, Conn.,) asks if his penmanship is good enough for a book-keeper. It is, or for any other purpose.

E. M. S. (Cotton Hill, W. Va.,) asks: "1st. What is the cause of the great money panic now prevailing? please explain. 2d. Did Gen. Stonewall Jackson die of wounds received from his own men or from the enemy? I have heard it stated that his own pickets shot him. 3d. Where do the following lines occur—

'Imagination cannot paint that spot,
Around, above, beneath where thou art not!'

4th. Who prepares the pictures for the stories published in your paper—the author or yourselves? 5th. How are some parts of a picture made to appear more distant than the rest? This is something I never could understand. 6th. In order to keep up with the fashion, how is my handwriting? and how does it compare with your correspondents in general?" 1st. Extended stock speculations, and a general desire to grow rich too fast, were, in our opinion, among the causes of the late panic. Probably an undue haste in trying to pay off the national debt, also had a good deal to do with it. Happily it is now about over. 2d. It is most likely that his wounds were received from the latter. 3d. We cannot say. Some of our readers may be able to give the authorship of the quotation. 4th. The writers of the stories have nothing to do with that part. They are designed on wood by an artist whose business is designing, and then engraved by a wood-engraver. 5th. Chiefly by making those parts more obscure, and by lessening the size of figures and objects.

CARL, (Ryerson's Station, Greene County, Pa.,) writes us the following interesting communication relative to the hair-snake matter: "I notice in your issue of January 3d, 1874, that 'Loquacious' brings up the 'hair-snake' question, and seems to be fully persuaded in his own mind that this undulating, wriggling, twisting, squirming thing that he had noticed was a real 'serpident,' transformed and transmuted from a veritable little hair, and having head and tail and body all complete. Has 'Loquacious' yet to learn 'that things are not always what they seem' to be? And that a little more seeing might have caused a dissolving view, and then the 'snaky' folds would have unfolded the truth. I too have examined what has been supposed to be a 'hair snake,' but found only the hair minus the snake. I am sorry that at the time I examined this hair, apparently instinct with life, I did not possess a microscope with which to make minute examinations and observations. My observations and examinations were after this manner: I noticed in a trough of water, (which was exposed to the direct rays of the sun, and to which horses were in the habit of going to drink,) a cream-colored hair which seemed to have increased in thickness much beyond a common hair and to have a dense, semi-opaque surface, and more than this I have observed a wavy squirming motion in the hair or in its covering. Now had I been satisfied to stop here the hair-snake would have been complete. But like Josh Billings's men boring for oil I did not know when to stop, and so I kept on until I let all the romance out at the bottom. In holding the 'hair-apparent' snake up to the light I noticed what appeared to me to be a real hair in the centre extending the entire length. I began to draw the supposed snake through between my thumb and forefinger, when lo! the fleshy coating came off, and I held a hair intact and devoid of life or motion. From the observations and examinations then and there made I conclude that animalculæ in the water seize upon the hair, much the same as oysters adhere to a log or barnacles to a ship, and make it a kind of nucleus and support to bear them in a body through the water. The hair being flexible yields to their united action, and thus seems to have motion. The naked eye cannot individualize these minute animalculæ, so we mistake as one body that which may consist of millions of individuals."

We ask the particular attention of C. M. B., (South Bend, Ind.,) another correspondent, who writes to us on this same question, to the above. C. M. B. also asks:

"Is there a cheap solvent for India rubber, so that we could turn to good account the now wasted old rubber? If a cheap solvent could be found, there are very many uses that could be made profitable out of the old cast-off shoes and old rubber belts." Nothing cheap enough to make the process profitable, we believe. The best solvents of gutta percha are bi-sulphuret of carbon and chloroform.

H. W. D., (Grand Island, Cal.,) asks: "1st. On which finger did Queen Victoria wear her engagement ring? 2d. Which is the proper finger for a lady to wear her engagement ring on?" 1st. We were not acquainted with her at that time; but we will ask her the next evening she calls upon us. 2d. The finger next to the little finger of the left hand is the one on which the engagement ring is usually worn by Philadelphia ladies.

G. W. H., (Philadelphia,) asks: "1st. Can you let me know how to take the glazing from photographs prior to painting them? 2d. Can you recommend a good book of instruction on photograph painting?" 1st. We are not acquainted with the process. 2d. Inquire of some practicer of the art. The Photographer's Manual might give you information on the subject.

P. A. P., (Hayes' Store, N. C.,) asks: "Will you or one of your many correspondents please give me the name of the author of the poem from which the following lines are taken?—

'Cease, scribbler, cease; why all these mighty pains
To tell the world the Lord denied thee brains?
Forbear to write, content thyself to read—
An ass in a lion's skin's an ass indeed.'"

We cannot just at present give the name of the author. Some of our readers may know it. Byron in his "English Bards and Scotch Reviewers" has something similar to the lines our correspondent quotes.

[Several letters are held over to be answered in our next.]